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When Wm. F. Buckley Jr. Was Public Enemy No. 363

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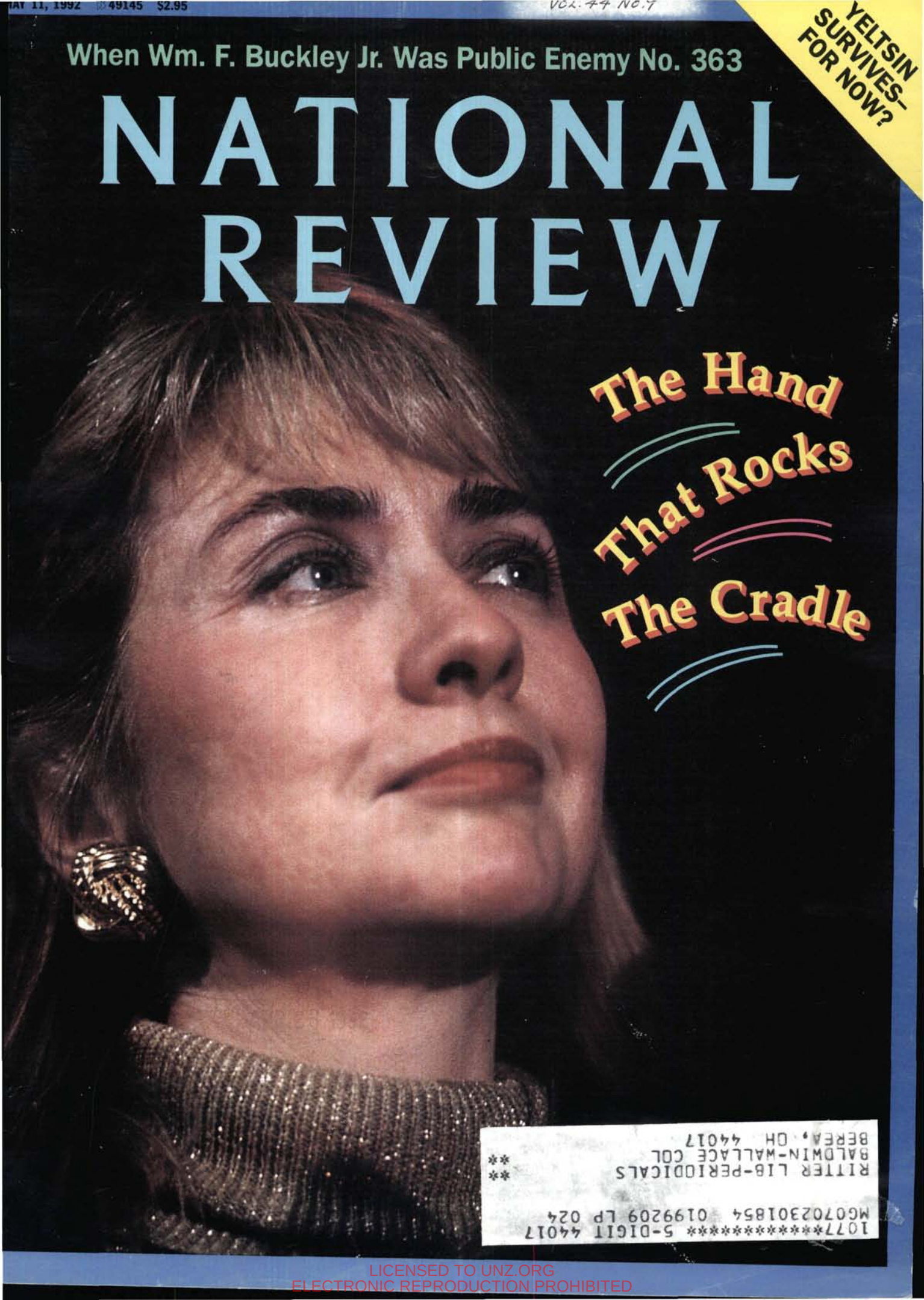


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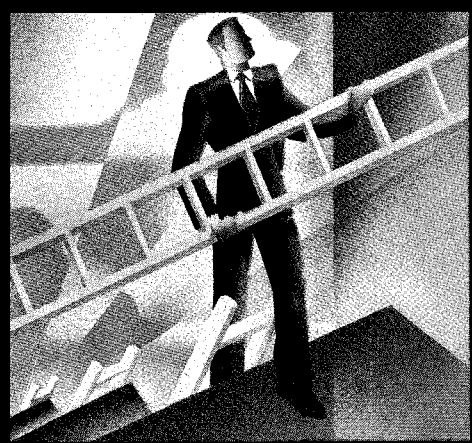

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MAY 11, 1992 VOL. XLIV, NO. 9

## Cover Story

34 ***The Hand That Rocks the Cradle***
Kids, are your folks mean? Wanna sue? Mrs. Clinton will be happy to help. In fact, **Walter Olson** demonstrates, she *insists*. . . . Also, below, Florence King sits Hillary down in her Misanthrope's Corner.

## Articles

19 ***On the Scene***
Have the hard-liners won after all? **Elisabeth Rubinfien** judges Yeltsin's seaworthiness in the wake of the Russian parliament. . . . By visiting Ann Stone, head of Republicans for Choice, **William McGurn** sneaks a peak under the "big tent." . . . The Tories won, but by default: **Anthony Lejeune** wishes they'd read the papers.

25 ***Can Democracy Drive Foreign Policy?***
**Elliott Abrams** argues that the "self-coup" by Peru's President Fujimori requires more than a knee-jerk response. . . . The West is not helpless before the Islamic fundamentalist tide, **Peter Rodman** notes, because democracy means more than rule by popular whim—and the cold war taught us how to face fanatics.

36 ***Laboratories of Democracy***
**Stephen Moore** reports that the real agents of change in today's America are governors—conservative innovators and liberal copycats.

39 ***Father of Neoconservatives***
Though Reinhold Niebuhr lived on the Left, **Michael Novak** deems his thought subversively conservative.

42 ***Inside the FBI***
**Natalie Robins** presents the choicest bits of Wm. F. Buckley Jr.'s 690-page FBI file. . . . **Geoffrey Morris** reads from the KGB's dossier on Ronald Reagan.

## Books, Arts & Manners

46 **John Gray** finds fault with Francis Fukuyama's admittedly interesting argument in *The End of History and the Last Man*: will the next century see international boredom, or truly interesting times? . . . **Martin Sieff** praises Robert Slater's professional treatment of a fascinating subject in *Warrior Statesman: The Life of Moshe Dayan*. . . . Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr. does a fine job of dissecting multiculturalism in *The Disuniting of America*, but as a good liberal fails to actually defend the culture; **Richard Brookhiser** offers a few pointers. . . . Though Florence King's *With Charity Toward None: A Fond Look at Misanthropy* has saved us from the swamp of niceness, **Joseph Sobran** accuses her of excessive cheer. . . . How is Robert Altman, director of *The Player*, like Jackie Collins? **John Simon** counts the ways. . . . **Ralph de Toledano** muses on Stravinsky's virtuous venom, Strauss's elfin heaviness, and more. . . . All we needed to civilize the French was a talking mouse, **Jenny Rees** discovers at Euro Disneyland.

64 ***The Misanthrope's Corner***
Hillary Clinton may be a New Woman, but **Florence King** knows the type all too well.

## Sections

4 ***Letters***
8 ***From the Editor***
10 ***For the Record***
12 ***The Week***
30 help
59 ***Trans-O-Gram***
62 ***On the Right***

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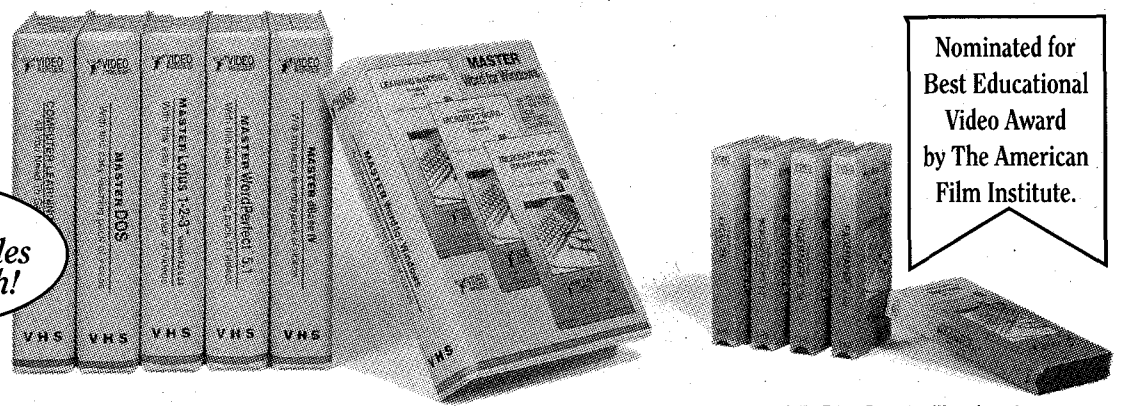


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# LETTERS

### *Just, or Not?*

It cannot pass without comment that your reputable publication would publish an article so inaccurate and incomplete as that of Peter Samuel ["Bankrupted by EPA," March 16]. It is truly remarkable that you would publish an account of a criminal trial where the author did not even bother to contact one of the parties to the case. If Mr. Samuel had done so, he would have discovered many things. For example, that the EPA was not involved in the litigation. The prosecution was a cooperative effort of the West Virginia Department of Natural Resources (DNR), the FBI, and the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Southern District of West Virginia. If Mr. Samuel had bothered to review all the facts, he might not have been left with the opinion that Mr. Law had been unjustly convicted of violating the federal Clean Water Act.

In 1977, Mr. Law leased the rights to the surface of the land in question, for the purpose of removing, processing, and marketing coal from slurry ponds and coal refuse piles. In May 1980, Mr. Law purchased 241 acres of the surface of this land from the New River Company.

Mr. Law claims he did not know of any pollution problem at the time he bought the land. This contention simply cannot be sustained in view of the evidence presented at trial. A senior official of the New River Company informed Mr. Law of the problems before the sale. The deed conveying the property contained a clause concerning environmental problems that—to an individual of average intelligence—would serve as a red flag. Leroy Gilbert, a water inspector for the state of West Virginia, met with Mr. Law on April 30, 1980, and told Mr. Law of the serious nature of the pollution problem. Mr. Gilbert's motivation was to ensure that a responsible and competent owner controlled the property. Mr. Law told Gilbert that he was aware of the problem and that he could, and would, handle it. Moreover, Mr. Law's claim of ignorance is belied by the fact that he leased this same property for three years before he bought it.

Although the fact was not revealed at trial, civil enforcement was attempted for more than a decade before criminal charges were brought. It is a matter of public record that Mr. Law was sued in civil-enforcement and injunction actions in 1984, 1988, and 1991.

In sum, the evidence presented at trial proved that Mr. Law knowingly bought a water-treatment system when he bought the site; that he operated it, or had lessees operate it, for substantial periods of time. And he never denied responsibility for it until late 1987, in the context of a state enforcement action.

In legal, technical terms, the federal Clean Water Act criminalizes the knowing discharge of pollutants from a point source into a water of the United States without a permit. The Act does not require that the accused create the pollution. In this case, Mr. Law bought property that included a ninety-acre gob pile with an existing treatment system. The evidence presented at trial proves Mr. Law operated the treatment system when he found it convenient, and failed to operate it when not convenient, all notwithstanding his knowledge of his legal obligations.

Mr. Law was accorded a fair trial presided over by District Judge Elizabeth Hallanan. In applying the Clean Water Act to the facts of this case, Judge Hallanan carefully and thoroughly researched and considered all legal issues. Mr. Law's constitutional and other rights were protected and honored at every step of this prosecution. Moreover, a jury of 12 of his peers—not Judge Hallanan or the United States Government—found Mr. Law guilty.

Mr. Law is not a victim of a Kafkaesque regulatory system run amok. Rather, he has disregarded all lawful authority.

*Charles T. Miller*
*Acting United States Attorney*
*Charleston, W. Va.*

*If I had contacted Mr. Miller and he had tried to sell me this nonsense, I would have been far tougher in my original report. The DA's letter amply confirms the view that under his administration of justice in West Virginia there has been—to borrow his own apt word—"Kafkaesque" treatment of a man.*

*Miller chooses to cite the testimony of an officer of the coal company that had sold this mess to the defendant that as the prospective buyer he had been fully informed of the pollution problems that came with the purchase. The DA fails to mention the opposite, and more credible, testimony of another officer of the same coal company (Don Reedy) that it was company policy to "conceal and deceive prospective buyers" about any pollution problems.*

*The DA would have us believe that 1) a man would buy a title only to the surface rights to a property intending to make money by mining coal under the surface and that 2) he would proceed with a transaction to buy land on which he could at most hope to earn a few tens of thousands of dollars a year, having been told it had pollution treatment obligations that would cost of the order of $250,000 a year for ever after. There were some small waste-reclamation projects done by lessees, but there was never a tenth of the revenue to support the pollution treatment being demanded by inspectors.*

*The DA maintains that the defendant indicated by his several attempts to get the pollution system running that he accepted a legal obligation to do this. Baloney! He was just trying to get the government guys off his back.*

*When the defendant found he could not afford to pay out $5,000 per week to run the pollution treatment system continuously, the DA characterizes this as the defendant doing something which is "convenient" and berates him for having "disregarded all lawful authority." What on earth would the DA have had the defendant do to produce revenue sufficient to maintain the $5,000-per-week system? Should he have gone out and robbed banks or dealt drugs?* —PS

### *Trading Policies*

Irwin Stelzer argues for "a middle ground between protectionism and unilateral free trade" ["The New Protectionism," March 16]. A policy of unconditional open markets may be "intellectually satisfying," says Stelzer, but is ultimately "both economically unsound and politically impossible." Realistically, America can lower her trade barriers only if other countries do the same; to this end, we have to be willing to close markets on occasion to pressure our trading partners to open theirs.

In taking this approach Stelzer ignores the fact that the U.S. is already saddled with wide-ranging and highly burdensome protectionist policies that have nothing to do with other countries'



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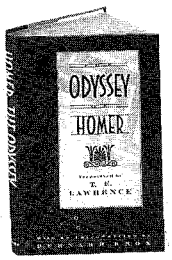


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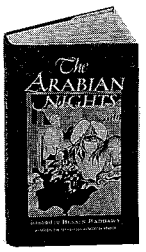


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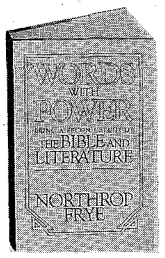


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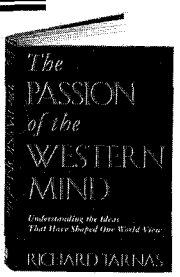


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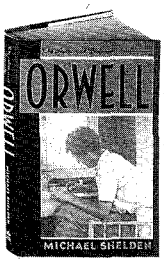


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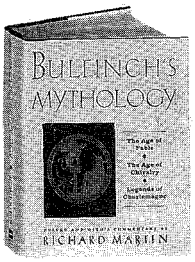


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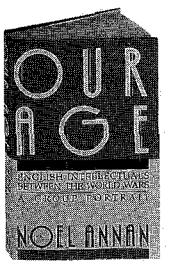


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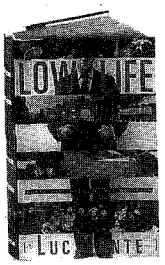


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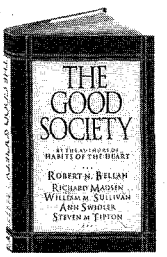


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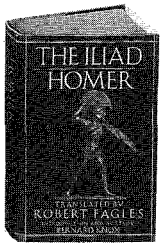


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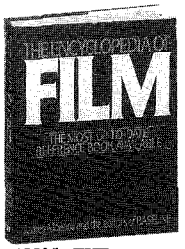


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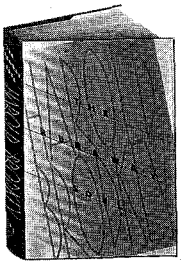

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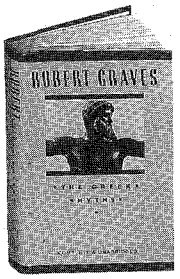


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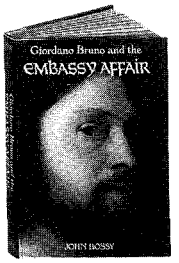


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closed markets. To take only the most egregious examples, the quota restrictions on imports of textiles, agricultural products, autos, steel, and machine tools were imposed not to pry open foreign markets, but for the old-fashioned purpose of stifling competition. Stelzer sanctifies such special-interest handouts by converting them into "bargaining chips."

Stelzer is flatly wrong when he contends that only the threat of trade sanctions will force other countries to open their markets. Look at the sweeping liberalization that has occurred in Mexico and Chile, in Australia and New Zealand, and that is now under way in Argentina, Venezuela, Brazil, and India. These countries have been tearing down trade barriers right and left, and they've been doing so unilaterally: no long-winded international negotiations, no knuckling under to U.S. pressure. Compared to these changes, the few concessions we have wrung out of our trading partners through threats and intimidation are paltry indeed.

The countries cited above began dropping their trade barriers because the rest of the world was leaving them behind economically. If the U.S. were to dismantle its own self-destructive mercantilist policies, the effect would be to pressure other countries in a way that really counts: through superior economic performance. Stelzer's dismissal of this course as "politically impossible" is defeatism masquerading as realism.

*Brink Lindsey*
*Director of Regulatory Studies*
*Cato Institute*
*Washington, D.C.*

*Mr. Lindsey is quite right: our own protectionist policies are costly, and often are not reciprocations for the barriers of others. I join him in condemning them. We should dismantle restrictions on textile imports, which hurt American consumers and poorer countries, and end protection of the bloated automobile industry.*

*But it would be foolish to think that we can get the Japanese to remove barriers to American agricultural products without making those barriers an impediment to access to some of our markets. And if anyone thinks that Mexico will allow us access to their oil industry simply out of new-found love for us, he'd better think again. Or that Brazil opened its markets because of a sudden appreciation for Adam Smith.*

*I wish I could agree with Mr. Lindsey that dismantling our own barriers to imports would so improve our economic performance that other nations would join in a huge bonfire of import controls. And that there are enough true turn-the-other-cheek Christians in Congress to constitute a majority for unilateral elimination of tariffs, quotas, and the other paraphernalia of protectionism. I doubt it, and am therefore reduced to espousing judicious reciprocity rather than pure free trade. But then again, I'm new to Washington, and could be wrong. I hope so.* —IMS

### *Friends and Supporters*

Since when did listing the voting record of members of Congress become an "enemies list" ["The Week," April 13].

The senators who voted against limiting debate on the public-broadcasting bill—voting against "cloture" effectively prevents consideration of the bill—are considered among the friends of public broadcasting. No one faults them for being given bad information. Once the unsubstantiated attacks on public broadcasting emanating from the offices of the Heritage Foundation, Center for the Study of Popular Culture, Center for Media and Public Affairs, The Media Research Center, and others, reported in COMINT, *Mediawatch*, the *Washington Times*, and other sources, were given the light of day, we were able to correct the numerous errors.

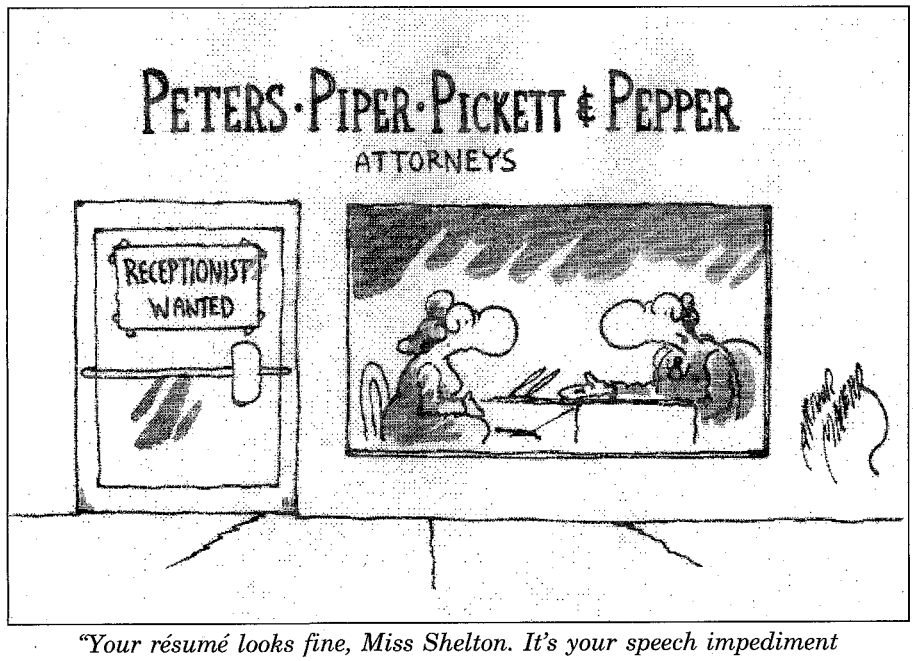
Just as citizens should assert their rights to petition their government in order to hold the Congress accountable to the public's interests regarding public broadcasting, people should also hold these other organizations they support account for unwarranted attacks on public broadcasting.

Support for public broadcasting has always been bipartisan, and public broadcasting considers its friends to be conservative, liberal, and everyone in between. Neither those who record a vote against it nor conservatives are enemies of public broadcasting.

Petitioning your government is a constitutional right of every citizen. The public should always be encouraged to express their opinions on an issue, including the reasons why they value an institution like public television enough to match federal dollars with their own voluntary contributions.

By the way, public broadcasting's business and products are open to public inspection and annual debate. The thousands of public board members at local stations know a great deal about fairness, balance, and fiscal management. They make the policy decisions that govern the stations' everyday management of these issues.

*David J. Brugger*
*President*
*America's Public Television Stations*
*Washington, D.C.*




*"Your résumé looks fine, Miss Shelton. It's your speech impediment that troubles me."*

### *A Joke Too Far*

Your caustic remark indicating that Ted Kennedy "was doubtless worried that Goodwin might next say that male monkeys behave like Kennedys" was nothing more than insensitive mud-slinging ["The Week," March 30]. I understand your disdain for the Kennedys but that does not excuse such a demonstration of poor taste. Were you shooting from the hip or do you have some credible evidence that male monkeys behave so abominably?

*Eugene L. Notkin*
*Saugus, Mass.*



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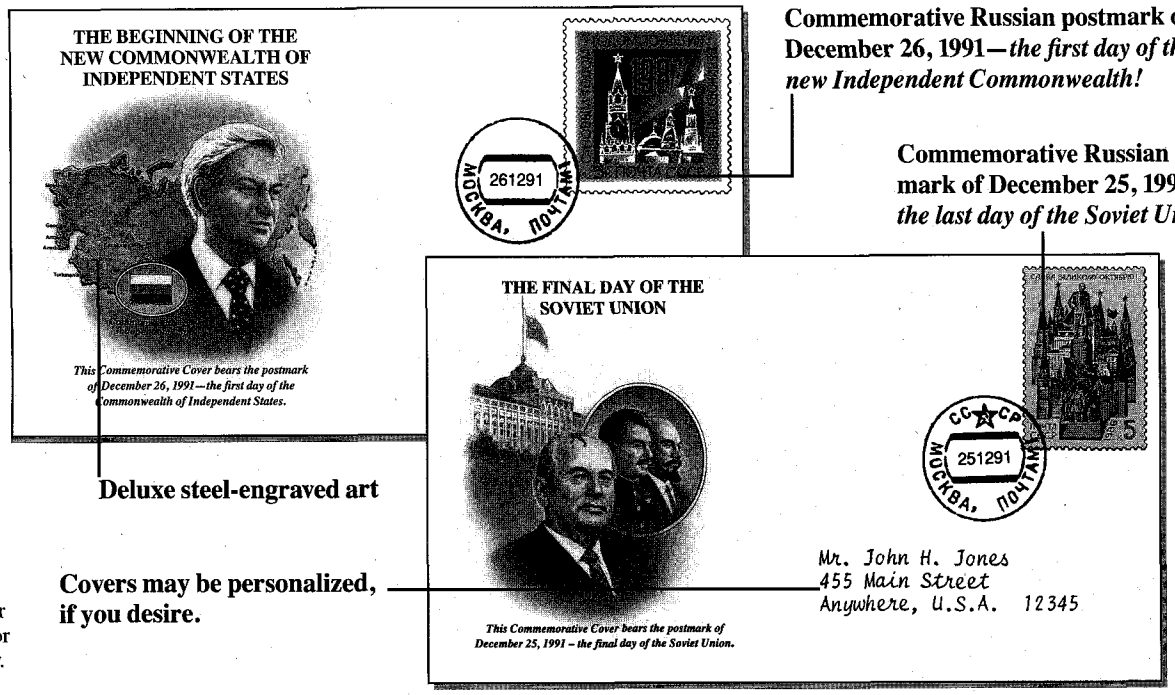
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# NATIONAL REVIEW

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## FROM THE EDITOR

# Mr. Bush's Horoscope?

LONDON

■ A minor pleasure of the Tory election victory was to watch the pundits wriggling in the coils of their own false predictions. It was evident from the first few results that the Tories would win a modest overall majority.

But the television pundits went on claiming that the final outcome was too close to call for some hours. Their exit polls had forecast a Parliament in which no party would enjoy a clear majority—and that was that.

They treated these polls as the election result, amending their precise forecasts in the light of actual votes, but not abandoning them altogether. Accordingly, the state-of-the-art computerized predictions consistently limped behind what any non-expert could see was happening.

Indeed, at the splendid *Daily Telegraph* election party, I won several bets with unwary statisticians.

■ What this indicated, of course, was that some voters had lied to the pollsters about the votes they had just cast. Why? The best guess is that they had voted against higher taxes, but were ashamed to admit it.

In Britain as in the U.S., moralistic denunciations of "greed" are pervasive in the liberal media—and thought to be influential. The Thatcherite "project" of transforming the British into self-reliant individualists was said to have failed. Leftist politicians happily cited opinion polls showing that most voters would forgo tax cuts to spend more on improving public services.

That at least is what they said to respectable middle-class pollsters. In the secrecy of the polling booth, however, they voted their real beliefs—namely, that no amount of extra taxation will improve public services, and so they might as well spend the money on themselves and their families.

So the constant preaching of the liberal media *did* have an effect. It turned people into liars. If I were a liberal Democrat, that would worry me.

■ And, of course, John Major's victory *has* worried liberal Democrats, and comforted the Bush campaign, both sides having presumably read Humphrey Taylor's recent *NR* article [March 2] in which he pointed out that since 1945 Tory victories in Britain have foreshadowed Republican victories in the U.S. (and vice versa).

Quite apart from this general trend, the British election bore uncanny resemblances to the U.S. campaign. It pitted a quiet managerial incumbent with a fuzzy ideology, who had succeeded a world-historical superstar, against a widely distrusted opponent, in an economic recession.

Mr. Bush must have read this as almost a personal horoscope: "You will have many ups and downs in the year, but you will win through in the end."

But a closer look is less comforting. Mr. Major enjoyed three advantages unavailable to the President.

First, he had the tax issue, which Mr. Bush has thrown away. Second, the electoral appeal of "change"—which damages Mr. Bush even as he tries to co-opt it—was, in Britain, greatly diluted by the Italian, German, and French elections, in which unsavory parties made gains in an atmosphere of political chaos. Third, the popular press in Britain is unashamedly Tory. Indeed, as Anthony Lejeune mentions (p. 22), it fought the election far more effectively than the Conservative Central Office, driving home such themes as Labour's plans for higher taxes, higher mortgages, etc., with an unscrupulousness worthy of Lee Atwater or James Carville.

My favorite last-minute election scare was Page Three of the *Sun*, which, instead of its usual gorgeous, pouting, topless model, ran a photograph of a homely mountainous lady over the caption: "Here's How Page Three Will Look Under Kinnock."

In the U.S. we would now be reading feminist denunciations of Wilhelmina Horton on every op-ed page.

—JOHN O'SULLIVAN



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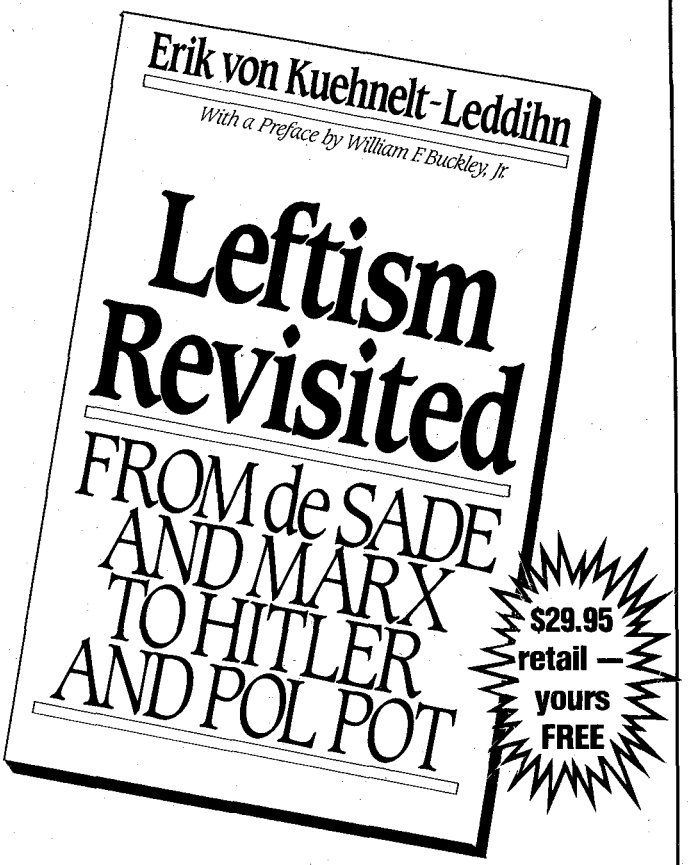
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# FOR THE RECORD

■ Current polls have **Ross Perot** garnering as much as 25 per cent of vote against **George Bush** and **Bill Clinton** in November. (Polls at this stage in 1980 and 1968, however, had both **John Anderson** and **George Wallace** in 20 per cent range; Anderson wound up with 7 per cent and Wallace with 13.) . . . Former **Reagan** campaign manager **Ed Rollins** says, "I would be most concerned [about Perot] if I were sitting in the President's camp, because this is a guy who is going to spend $100 million arguing against the status quo." . . . **Kevin Phillips** figures Perot—pro-military, pro-business—would tap votes of Sun Belt Republicans, 40 per cent of whom are strong Bush doubters. Phillips envisions Perot, if he enters and stays in to the end, drawing two votes from Bush nationwide for every vote he draws from Clinton. On that reading, a Perot candidacy could help Clinton carry the eight states in which Bush beat **Michael Dukakis** by less than 5 per cent (California, Connecticut, Illinois, Maryland, Missouri, New Mexico, Pennsylvania, and Vermont) and to win Texas or his home state, Arkansas, and one other, thus giving him at least the 270 electoral votes needed. . . . How will check bouncers fare in November? Times-Mirror finds that 61 per cent of Americans polled would probably or definitely vote against a ten-check bouncer; 78 per cent against hundred-check bouncer. . . . Possible huge gain for Republicans from redistricting in Florida, where congressional make-up could change from the current 10 Republicans and 9 Democrats to 17 and 6. . . . In Massachusetts, three Dems look vulnerable because of redistricting and House Bank mess: **Joseph Early**, **Chet Atkins**, and **Nicholas Mavroules**. . . . Meanwhile **Becker** Institute poll has Bay State GOP Gov. **William Weld**'s approval rating up to 54 per cent, from 41 per cent in October. Weld will join fellow GOP governors **John Engler** of Michigan and **Tommy Thompson** of Wisconsin at November conference on states and welfare reform sponsored by NATIONAL REVIEW, Cato Institute, and Change-NY. Contact **Lisa Nelson** at *NR* for info.

■ Who is taking over whom? As Hong Kong waits warily for 1997 Peking takeover, its booming economy (the world's 11th largest trading "nation") becomes more dependent on China, with 80 per cent of its exports originating on Mainland. But they come mostly from neighboring Guangdong province, whose economy is growing at more than 25 per cent a year by defying Peking's economic policies; in a January visit there Paramount Leader **Deng Xiaoping** relaunched his economic reform program, making South China his model. . . . **Hamish Macleod**, Hong Kong's Financial Secretary, explains the Crown Colony's success: "a commitment to enterprise, . . . low taxation, and . . . free markets and free trade." Macleod reported a 5 per cent growth in GDP, up from 4 per cent last year. . . . Meanwhile, businessmen from Taiwan (whose central reserves are more than $85 billion, largest in the world) have invested more than $3 billion in 2,800 projects in Hong Kong and South China. Taiwan's GNP is growing at over 7 per cent a year. Still, many locals are hedging their bets: some 1,200 Hong Kongers are leaving weekly for Canada, the U.S., and Southeast Asia. . . . Pentagon Assistant Secretary **James Lilley** has been making speeches warning Communist China not to use its increasing military budget to threaten Taiwan. . . . Other Asian Communists are still acting like old-fashioned Stalinists: In Pyongyang, 84-year-old Chinese President **Yang Shang-kun** celebrated the eightieth birthday of **Kim Il-sung**, North Korea's Beloved Leader and Ever Victorious Captain of the Korean People, with a cast of hundreds of thousands in a style that would have warmed Tovarishch **Josef**'s heart. Kim got a quilt stuffed with the down from the necks of 700,000 sparrows. . . . Japan-bashers are having a hard time with Tokyo's stock-market rout: They can't take much satisfaction in a "recession" in which GNP growth rate continues at over 2 per cent and there will be 1.25 jobs for each entrant into the labor market.

© Matt, *Daily Telegraph*, London / Rotheo

*"We're the three wise men."*

■ Washington whisper is that moderate-to-conservative former VOA chief and current U.S. ambassador to the Seychelles **Richard Carlson** may be named to head Corporation for Public Broadcasting. This is relief for CPB supporters because it might mean its survival, and for conservatives because he can prevent further NEAization of CPB. . . . **Burton Yale Pines** announced his resignation as Heritage Foundation senior VP. Pines, an early and loud critic of Bush Administration, left because of "organizational differences," says Heritage, and now hangs hat at the National Center for Public Policy Research, of which he is founding chairman. Heritage denies rumors of defenestration. . . . Young America's Foundation is holding its National Conservative Student Conference July 19–25 at George Washington University. Speakers include **Edwin Meese**, *NR* Senior Editor **Jeffrey Hart**, and **Bill Kristol**, chief of staff to Vice President **Dan Quayle**.

■ **David Brinkley** on House Bank: "Any politician who stops spending because he's run out of money doesn't belong in Washington anyway."



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# THE WEEK

■ A new poll in Texas shows Ross Perot beating George Bush 35 to 30 per cent, with a third-party candidate claiming 20.

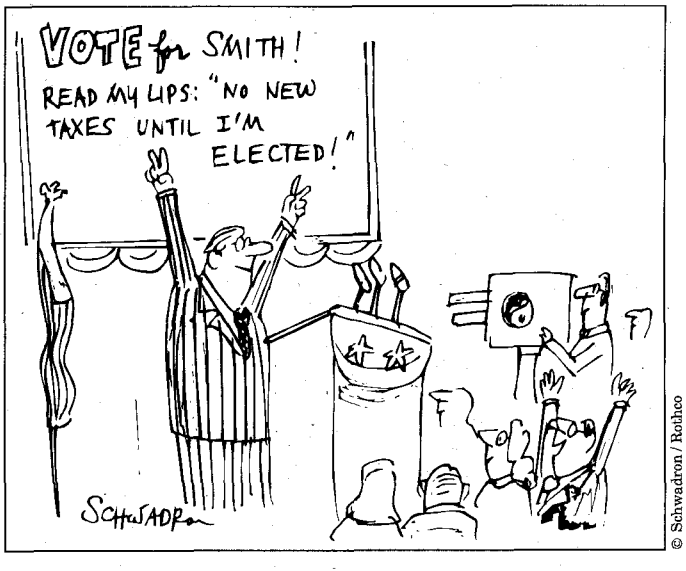
■ This just in, from the metaphysics desk at *Newsweek*: "The Eighties were about fantasy; the Nineties are about reality."

■ As the check-kiting scandal heated up, the Democrats who run the Congress came up with a defense: that the White House is just as bad. In fact, worse: Air Sununu cost the taxpayers millions; the House Bank nothing. Now, there are certainly a number of perks built up with the cold war in mind (from Air Force One on down) that rightly deserve review. But the idea that there is some sort of moral equivalence between what is going on in the legislative branch and what is going on in the executive branch is ludicrous. The issue in the check-kiting scandal is not the perk of an overdraft: it is the patronage that surrounds the Bank and other House institutions, and the stubborn failure of the House leadership to do anything about it once it was pointed out. Meanwhile, the National Taxpayers Union has calculated that of the 17 worst check kiters, 15 spent more than the average congressman on legislation, and 9 of these were among the biggest spenders. Maybe the public's anger isn't as misdirected as alleged.

■ Oh, how they're gloating about the imprisonment, at last, of Leona Helmsley, convicted (on a technicality) of having paid only $53.7 million rather than the $55.4 million the Federal Government claims as its due. The press coverage seems to have been dictated by Madame Defarge. Mrs. Helmsley, this year's sacrifice on the altar of democracy, began serving her four-year sentence just before April 15. There are, of course, no criminal penalties for congressmen who want to spend the $53.7 million for such purposes as preserving Lawrence Welk's birthplace.

■ Who could be unmoved by the spectacle of the captive nations of the Soviet empire struggling to rejoin the human race? For that reason, few conservatives care to complain about whatever aid we may send the Russians and their fellow victims. If we really want to help them, however, what we should do is grant them free trade (and press the Brussels Eurocrats to grant it too). And here's another idea: let skilled ex-Soviets come here to work on a special temporary visa. They would send money back to their families—a form of foreign aid guaranteed to be saved and spent more carefully than money sent through any government agency. And they would learn more about capitalism and a free society than from a hundred lectures by Harvard Business School professors moonlighting on some expense-paid summer vacation. It is true that Washington has been notoriously poor at convincing the holders of temporary visas to go back to their native lands. But suppose the ex-Soviets were allocated 100,000 or so of the 700,000 permanent visas currently issued each year—most for purposes of "family reunification," i.e., importing 16th cousins. They would still remit money. A high proportion of them would go back eventually anyway (many immigrants do). And the U.S. would have done something about the precipitous decline in the skill levels of its immigrant flow. Of course, this would benefit both the U.S. and the captive nations and cost the American taxpayer nothing. Obviously not practical politics.

■ A dozen-plus groups like the Sierra Club, Ralph Nader's Public Citizen, and the Rainforest Action Network signed a full-page *New York Times* ad claiming that President Bush wants to "give a secretive foreign bureaucracy vast new powers to threaten American laws that protect your food, your health, your wilderness and wildlife, and your job." The villain is not the Elders of Zion or even Ollie North, but the Uruguay Round of GATT (the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade). You see, "the only thing *free* about free trade is the freedom it gives the world's largest corporations to circumvent democracy." Translation: If GATT declares a given U.S. law an unfair barrier to trade, the President can actually ask Congress to repeal or modify it. In fact, a stronger GATT, dependent as always on the active cooperation of signatory nations, could high-



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light the lunacy of laws favored by environmental-lobbyists—the ad's sponsors. These are the same folks who, as Murray Weidenbaum pointed out last issue, are preparing to set up a *real* international bureaucracy at the Earth Summit this June in Rio.

■ Serbia has defied the international community once again, seizing territory in Bosnia and Herzegovina by main force just as it had earlier grabbed portions of Croatia and Slovenia. Frenetic mediating efforts by the EC and the UN have been to no avail. There is no hope of an end to Serbian aggression unless real (as opposed to symbolic) leverage is brought to bear. Economic sanctions are important to any such strategy, but history teaches us the inadequacy of economic sanctions alone. The U.S. proposal that Serbia be suspended from membership in the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe is laughable, a parody of the kind of diplomatic flailing about that our State Department resorts to when it has no serious policy. We would do better to consider sending military supplies to the forces of the new republics resisting Serbian power. Our choices are that, or some outside (perhaps West European) military intervention, or acquiescing in the Serbian fait accompli. Everything else is an evasion.

■ The Diversity Action Plan of the University of Arizona outlaws discrimination against students because of "age, color, ethnicity, gender, national origin, physical and mental ability, race, religion, sexual orientation, Vietnam-era veterans status, socio-economic background, or individual style." A university that does not discriminate on the basis of mental ability does seem to be something of a breakthrough. The Asian-American Journalists Association, meanwhile, has issued a pamphlet warning reporters against using the word "industrious" to describe people of Asian–Pacific heritage. Other off-limits words for Asian-Americans are "reserved," "quiet," "philosophical," "serene," and "smiling." It would certainly appear to be inappropriate to use any of those fine words in describing the political-correctness cops of the Association. Their point, as we understand it, is that Asian-Americans are as lazy, aggressive, noisy, unreflective, agitated, and unfriendly as everybody else. We would like to think they are wrong.

■ The personnel director of New York City's Fire Department has paid a consultant four hundred grand to revamp a hiring exam so more women and minorities will pass. The $400,000 answer? 1) Give partial credit for wrong answers. On multiple-choice exams, consultant Frank Landy told the *New York Post*, "many people are able to get it down to the last two, but then always seem to choose the wrong one." 2) Make the physical exam pass-fail. Mr. Landy again: "The people who had 'fine' times were discriminated against because they couldn't match the 'spectacular' times of others, which really didn't make a lifesaving difference." So we will have as many people saved, but perhaps more maimed.

■ In Buffalo, where Operation Rescue is squaring off with "clinic defenders," police made no arrests when several abortion advocates physically assaulted a minister who stood reading his Bible in silent protest. Meanwhile, in New York, an abortionist was indicted for botching his job, prompting an interesting subheadline in the *Times*: "Failed Procedure Severed Baby's Arm." How would a successful procedure be described?

■ An earthquake can have the salutary effect of concentrating the mind on what really matters. *National Jesuit News* has a story reflecting on how the Jesuit community in the Bay Area reacted when the big quake hit three years ago. "The quake forced the veterans back to the essentials of common life," we are told. Father Joe Costa, the superior at Los Gatos, explains, "It was kind of grim. We had to skip community prayer. Everyone had to have a good strong Scotch. That's what they needed most at the time."

## Thatcherism Lives

SO THATCHERISM has not, after all, been consigned to the dustbin of history. Its hard edges may be softened, its decibel level lowered, but the "ism" that only a few weeks ago dared not speak its name remains the dominant theme in British politics. Old-fashioned socialism, disguised by Neil Kinnock as a new Europeanism, is unacceptable. So, too, is the massive income redistribution that John Smith, Labour's Shadow Chancellor of the Exchequer, hoped would gain credibility from its new advocate's dark suits and accountant-like demeanor.

### *Our Porous Borders*

The Bible's Babel was a place
Where every tongue and every race
Contended till the tower fell,
But no one bangs the fire bell
Except Buchanan, whose decline
Leaves Mr. Bush to re-define
The borders thing, and when *that* hits,
I wouldn't want to run Berlitz.

W. H. VON DREELE



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What the pollsters missed was nothing less than a profound change in British attitudes.

Britain has chosen to stay with the politics that arrested its decline, proving that the fundamental changes wrought by Thatcherism had an impact on voters that even a severe recession could not undo. Margaret Thatcher's emphasis on individual choice—a theme to which John Major repeatedly returned—has survived her departure. Individual responsibility, rather than reliance on government, has become the accepted standard against which to measure policy initiatives.

"What we need now," Mrs. Thatcher said more than a decade before becoming Prime Minister, "is a far greater degree of personal responsibility and decision, far more independence from the government, and a comparative reduction in the role of government." It is difficult today—after large chunks of the British economy have been transferred from the public to the private sector, after private health insurance and for-profit hospitals have become common, after the word "individual" has, in at least some circles, ceased being synonymous with "anti-social"—to capture the truly radical nature of Mrs. Thatcher's emphasis on individual responsibility and achievement. She was, after all, preaching that sermon in a comprehensive welfare state, in which the government had accepted swaddling-clothes-to-shroud responsibility for its subjects, and in which subordination of self to group (trade union, college, team, the state) was deemed the right social attitude; in return, the group would look after you. Labour asked Britain to return to this pre-Thatcher collectivism. The voters declined the invitation.

Thatcherism also meant—and means—a friendly attitude toward America. Again, Britain had a choice: on the one hand, Neil Kinnock's unqualified commitment to a centralizing, socialist federal Europe (or John Smith's more prosaic infatuation with the German corporatist model), and, on the other hand, John Major's Thatcherite support for a Europe allied to America and inspired by American values—individualism, drive, emphasis on economic progress, willingness to use military power for moral purposes. The British people voted for continuing the Atlantic alliance, and for a new incarnation of the Maggie-and-Ron relationship that produced the tough policies that won the cold war, provided mutual reinforcement for reducing the role of government via privatization (UK) and deregulation (U.S.), and increased incentives by cutting marginal tax rates on high earners.

Finally, the structural changes wrought by Thatcherism have proved to be both durable and profound. Mrs. Thatcher's insistence that union thugs not be permitted to interfere with Rupert Murdoch's move to Wapping and her government's opening up of broadcasting introduced diversity into the media industries, reducing the importance of establishment broadcasters; her support of Cecil Parkinson's "Big Bang" opened the City to previously excluded social groups, diffusing wealth and reducing class envy; her privatizing of electric, gas, telephone, and water services created a new share-owning class and reduced customers' tendency to look to government as the only possible provider of such essentials; the taming of the trade unions ended Luddite control of shop floors. These structural changes proved to have more influence on voters than a transitory recession.

In short, Labour failed to notice that Britain has become a more entrepreneurial, less class-envious society. And the pollsters failed to dig deeply enough to learn that these fundamental transformations are more important in determining how people vote than are the temporary irritations that determine snap responses to poll-takers. Both believed the departure of the hard-driving Mrs. Thatcher meant the end of Thatcherism. They were wrong. What John Major represents is the continuation of Thatcherism by other means.

## *Say It Isn't So*

Whether Skinner went off on a toot
And concocted this scam as a hoot,
Mr. Bush plans to cork
Ross Perot in New York
By declaring his signatures moot.

W. H. VON DREELE

## Good-Bye to All That

THE CONTINUING decline of 1930s-style labor unionism was reflected in two recent developments—one in that paradigm of Midwestern Middle America, Peoria, the other in that paradigm of something else, Washington, D.C.

In Peoria, Caterpillar, the manufacturer of heavy construction machinery, apparently broke its five-month United Auto Workers' strike. In the process, it altered the balance of the American collective-bargaining process while striking a blow for our country's competitiveness in the international marketplace. Three elements of Caterpillar's actions were noteworthy here: 1) its willingness to use permanent replacement workers for the strikers, an option traditionally available to employers under the national labor laws but only rarely used for fear of further worsening labor relations; 2) its refusal to engage in so-called "pattern bargaining," by which the wages



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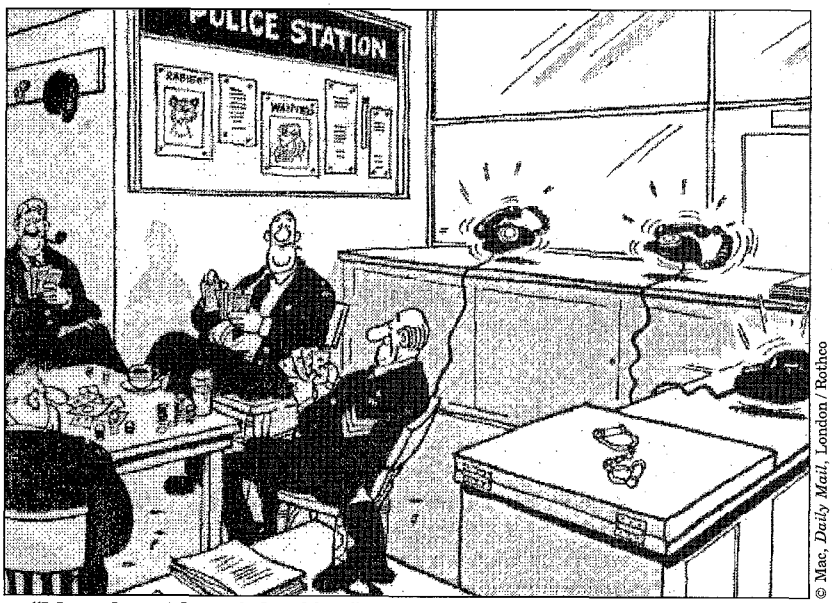
paid by an employer are largely determined by union negotiations with his competitors (at least his domestic competitors); and 3) its rejection of the UAW's demands that Caterpillar not merely guarantee its employees job security (to which Caterpillar agreed) but also guarantee a minimum number of positions.

If, as appears likely, Caterpillar finally prevails in its negotiations, the impact will be felt throughout the industrial sector, even though less than 15 per cent of that sector is unionized. The UAW will be significantly weakened going into its Big Three negotiations next year; the collective-bargaining balance will tilt away from wage determination by monopolistic unions and toward a competitive, market process; and the trade-union movement will be required to spend more time on internal affairs and less on promoting a socialist agenda in Congress.

This latter prospect has been advanced by a White House executive order finally giving force to a 1988 Supreme Court decision (*Beck*) that protects the free-speech rights of non-union workers. The Court held that, although such workers could be compelled to pay "agency fees" if they work in a union shop, they were entitled to refunds of any part of those fees that did not go to pure collective-bargaining activities. *Not* included in such activities was money spent electing liberal Democrats to Congress and lobbying for their legislative agenda.

Under President Bush's order, all government contractors will be required to post notices informing their workers of their *Beck* rights. An estimated two to three million workers will be affected, with the White House calculating a potential $2.4-billion impact if all eligible workers availed themselves of their right not to finance political candidates of their non-choice. While the real-world impact is likely to be far less than this, each dollar denied to the UAW, the IBEW, or the CWA is one dollar less for Bill Clinton, Tom Harkin, and Ron Dellums.

The NLRB, though charged with protecting employee rights, has done everything possible to treat *Beck* as classified information. Nor has the ACLU seen fit to speak out against employees' being required to subsidize political campaigns with which they disagree. Both bodies treat employees as the property of the union. That is the system now being undermined by such diverse forces as Caterpillar and Harry Beck. There should be no nostalgia for its passing.

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*"Marvelous idea of the Chief's, wasn't it? We ignore the phone and it brings down the rate of reported crimes."*

## Why Lamar Can't Read

IT'S a rare day when a Bush Cabinet member speaks with clarity on a key domestic issue. But the nation was recently afforded such a treat when Education Secretary Lamar Alexander told reporters that education wouldn't be a campaign issue in a Clinton–Bush race. How can you have an issue, he asked, "if there is little difference?" Secretary Alexander immediately came in for some heated criticism, but not because he was wrong. Rather, he had committed a gaffe: uttering an obvious but impolitic truth.

On paper the President is pretty good on educational choice, but he has done precious little to move it ahead. His speech at an Allentown, Pennsylvania, grade school is a case in point. While he made a strong case for elementary- and secondary-school choice (even though Secretary Alexander lobbied hard behind the scenes to get him to delete those passages), his main concrete proposal was for an expanded college-loan program. And this proposal looks suspiciously like the plan Governor Clinton has been touting. The gist of Bush's proposal is that all Americans would receive a $25,000 lifetime line of credit for college education, with repayment schedules and interest levels geared to income.

Missing were equally concrete proposals to give parents control over their children's primary and secondary schooling. Yet without school choice, the teachers' monopoly (what former Education Secretary William Bennett calls "the blob") will stave off any proposal for reform. And without school choice, President Bush has no wedge issue over challenger Bill Clinton.

Indeed, Mr. Clinton may have the wedge here. He proposes allowing recipients of student loans to repay them through community service as a police officer, social worker, etc. If Americans are



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as anxious to restore our communities as we believe, this may reclaim voters the Democrats had lost on other social issues. Mr. Clinton wins only limited credit for originality here: *NR* readers may recall a similar proposal in WFB's *Gratitude*, excerpted in our November 5, 1990, issue. But then, it is surely telling that Mr. Clinton is more willing than Mr. Bush's education secretary to accept ideas from conservatives.

Almost a year ago, NATIONAL REVIEW was virtually the only publication to report the conflict between the President's stated goals and those of his education secretary. Lamar Alexander has never been comfortable with school choice, though the idea that the rich should not be the only ones who have a choice in where to send their kids to school is easily understood by the electorate. However, the blame for the Administration's timidity must ultimately rest with the President himself. When the secretary admitted that, on this issue, there were no differences between the Bush and Clinton teams, he was telling the dismal truth.

## The Last Domino

"ANOTHER casualty of the August Revolution" is how a prescient Soviet journalist described Afghan President Najibullah in *Nezavisimaya Gazeta* last September. The puppet regime, propped up for a decade by the Red Army, had managed to survive the withdrawal of Soviet troops in February 1989; it was less likely to survive the cutoff of arms supplies as agreed to in September 1991 by the United States and the (post-coup) Soviet Union. The *mujahedin*, while subject to the same arms cutoff, had ample stocks of weapons—and of popular support—to fall back on.

Najibullah's departure represents the definitive defeat of the Soviet enterprise. The American strategic objective in Afghanistan now becomes to promote the accession to power of relative moderates who will give the country a well-deserved peace and to resist the pressures of Islamic fundamentalists who wish to enlist it in a new struggle. The Afghanistan America should want to see is one that will not link up with Iran or destabilize our ally Pakistan or radicalize its kinsmen over the border in the former Soviet Central Asia. Thus, a political compromise is in our interest, whether it be brokered by the UN negotiator or (more likely) imposed by Ahmad Shah Masood, the most powerful guerrilla commander, who has been allied with moderate elements in the rebels' exile political leadership in Peshawar. Pakistan's support for such a compromise, in contrast to the Pakistani military's previous patronage of the fundamentalists, is a positive sign.

With the collapse of the Soviets' Afghan enterprise, the books can finally be closed on the era of adventurism that Brezhnev and his clients embarked upon in the 1970s—in Angola, Cambodia, Nicaragua, Afghanistan. The Soviets had overreached in a period of American weakness; they and their clients proved unable to consolidate their gains before a revived American policy—dubbed the "Reagan Doctrine"—restored the international balance. Indeed, Afghanistan weakened the Soviet regime far beyond what anyone in the West could have imagined; it played its part in the discrediting of the Soviet system at home.

Thus, the free world owes the Afghan *mujahedin* a debt that it may never be able to repay in full. We owe them at the very least a continuing diplomatic effort to promote a decent outcome, and a contribution to their economic recovery after so much destruction at the hands of a brutal enemy.

## The Libyan Threat

MANDATORY international sanctions went into effect against Libya on April 15, cutting off airline service, banning arms sales, and expelling Libyan diplomats from their overseas posts. All this in response to the Libyan government's failure to extradite two suspected terrorists believed to be involved in the destruction of Pan Am 103. The imposition of UN sanctions pins responsibility on the regime that sponsored the atrocity.

A spate of fresh stories, including a cover story in *Time*, reopens the question of a Syrian and/or Iranian role in the crime as well. It is only too plausible that these two regimes would have been enthusiastic participants in the murder. Both have sponsored terrorism over many years. But authoritative accounts at the time of the indictments suggest that while the intelligence services of all three countries were involved at various stages, the Libyans—against whom the forensic evidence is overwhelming—bear the crucial responsibility. Whatever the role of the others, in any event, it does not diminish the Libyans' culpability. Nor should it deflect their punishment.

This leads us to a fundamental question: How long must we tolerate this renegade Libyan regime? Since Muammar Qaddafi came into power in 1969, he has been a source of continuing menace. Economic sanctions are a half-measure; it is not surprising that some of our Arab friends fear that sanctions may provoke Qaddafi into a new recklessness. François Mitterrand reportedly said to Vernon Walters, when Reagan sent him to seek French cooperation in the April 1986 bombing raid: "A definitive action I would support, but not a pinprick." Even



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allowing for the usual Mitterrand disingenuousness, the point was well taken. The U.S. must soon contemplate either more definitive military action or a covert program to remove the Libyan regime once and for all. Failing that, we must hunker down for endless provocations from the Libyan madman—which one day may be chemical, biological, or nuclear. Do we really want to take that risk?

## Nika Hazelton, R I P

IT'S A LATE spring evening. The tall windows are open and a light breeze flares the curtains; the sun is low to the west across the Hudson. The fifth-floor apartment is painted a stark white, the white broken by bookcases everywhere that stretch from floor to ceiling, and by Harold's upright piano. There are no gewgaws around and only one portrait, of an Italian forebear of Nika's.

Nika is entertaining. It's what she likes to do best, and does best in the world. She has gathered six or eight friends, mixing them up as thoroughly from the many worlds she and Harold inhabit as she has the sugar and eggs for the Mont Blanc dessert with which she intended to surprise me this evening. The conversation is animated. It is always animated at Nika and Harold's, and over it she hovers, rather than presides, sitting straight in a straight-backed chair to ease the constant pain of an arthritic back. A large-boned amiable Brunnhilde of a woman, she harks back genetically more to her German father than to her Italian mother.

The meal will be splendid, hearty rather than delicate, making full use of the fresh fruits and vegetables of the season, and liberally *arrosé* with wine. Her advice on wine is to provide half a bottle for each guest—minimum. As the author of more than thirty cookbooks, Nika conscientiously tests every recipe she endorses, trying them out as she is tonight, and a couple of times each week, on friends.

This is how most of us who knew them well remember Nika and Harold, surrounded by music and books, but sustained as well by good food and wine, and good talk.

Nika signed on with NATIONAL REVIEW in 1966, recommended to us by James Beard to write a new column on food and wine that we would call "Delectations." And a delectation it proved to be, encyclopedic in range, exploring Nika's many interests. One column might discuss icons Nika had discovered in old Byzantine churches in Bulgaria, and the next, hangover recipes for New Year's Day; Nika might tell how to make a picnic enjoyable, if one absolutely had to have a picnic, describe a hike she had taken as a girl in the Tyrolean Alps, or explain why a Cordon Bleu cook's dinner in America won't taste like the one she cooked in Paris. Delectations was one of the most popular columns *NR* ever ran.

Within five years Nika was so far integrated into the *NR* family that in November 1970, for NATIONAL REVIEW's 15th anniversary, invitations went out over her signature to a "PERFECTLY SMASHINGLY ABSOLUTELY WILD KNOCK-DOWN DRAG-OUT NO-HOLDS-BARRED GREAT BIG NOISY UNINHIBITED BRAWL OF A P * A * R * T * Y."

Like NATIONAL REVIEW's editors, Nika's *NR* readers came to consider her their friend. They flocked to bookstores three years ago to buy the first volume of her autobiography, *Ups and Downs: Memoirs of Another Time*, which told of her childhood and youth in Europe, ending with her sailing for America with her first husband, Anthony Standen, and their infant son, Tony (Julian was not yet born), as World War II broke out.

She was never able to write the second part of her story. The bad times were upon her. She had suffered from crippling arthritis for years, and had undergone numbers of operations. Now the pain settled in, imprisoning her in her apartment. But such were her mental resources and her strength that she continued her monthly column; barred from the forays she had made to gather material, she substituted voracious reading, phone calls to her many contacts, memories of wonders past. Her shoulders had become immobile, so she set up a portable electric Smith-Corona on a high table at nearly shoulder level and tapped out, letter by painful letter, the columns that so rejoiced her readers.

About a year ago that proved too much for even her iron will. She gave up the column and started to withdraw into a lonely pain-ridden world, with only Harold to help her, nurse her, love her. Last November she called out to Harold one morning and he did not answer—he had died of a heart attack. Her son Tony Standen and his wife, Jane, made all the arrangements to move Nika to a nursing home, where she came—very shortly, her friends assume—to the decision that life without Harold was not worth living. Week by week, as she lay silent, eyes closed, on her bed in a big corner room, she seemed to grow smaller, thinner. Her wrinkles disappeared. More often than not she fingered a rosary. On Palm Sun-

### *The Perot Thing*

The Electoral College count works
With some girls and a couple of clerks,
  But if nobody wins,
  Then the counting begins
In the House, where they're practicing smirks.

W. H. VON DREELE



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day, a friend dropped by with a frond of palms because, she explained, it had been her custom to do so. Three days later, Nika won her last battle.

Her death recalled the final upbeat sentence of *Ups and Downs*, as Nika and her two Tonys sail away from war-torn Europe to a new life in a new world: "I was happy beyond belief, because I knew that at last I could live for good in the one country in the world that spelled home to me."

Now, as then, bon voyage, Nika. —PLB

## Benny Hill, R I P

NOEL COWARD he was not, but he brought comic relief to audiences in the United Kingdom, in this country, and elsewhere with his slapstick and universal humor—that is, until the Thought Police of Political Correctness decided that his bawdiness was sexist and his stereotyped characters ethnically insensitive. We are saddened by his passing, and also by the thought that our children may be denied the risqué but essentially innocent fun that he represented.

## *NOTES & ASIDES*

■ Dear Mr. Buckley:

Much to my amusement, I recently ran across an album released by the head-bangin' heavy-metal rock group Warrior Soul entitled *Drugs, God, and The New Republic*. As easy as it is to understand how the former could have something to do with the thinking at the latter, what can you imagine to be their involvement with God?

Sincerely,
Barton A. Branscum
FPO Miami, Fla.

Dear Mr. Branscum: God is certainly an undistributed middle here. Cordially, WFB

■ Dear Mr. Buckley:

Six years ago from your office at NATIONAL REVIEW, you told me in an interview for Westinghouse Broadcasting's program *The World This Sunday Night* that only when God cleared His throat would the Communist government in the Soviet Union be shattered.

Did God clear His throat last summer?

Cordially,
Timothy S. Goeglein
Vienna, Va.

Dear Mr. Goeglein: Obviously! Didn't you *hear* Him? Cordially, WFB

■ Dear Mr. Buckley:

They're selling Lenin! The news reported yesterday that "certain officials" in the Russian Interior Ministry have proposed selling the personification of the evil empire in an auction, with a $15-million floor.

This is the Deal of the Century and we must act fast, before Michael Jackson gets into the act. After catching my breath I've considered what we could do with this cold killer.

At first I thought we should build a simple museum, with one twist: two entrance doors, one labeled "For those who oppose everything this man represents"; the other "For those who favor . . ." We could forevermore keep a count on what free people truly believe of Lenin and his system.

But maybe we should put Vladimir in a glass coffin, on a spit, and have him turning in his grave for all of eternity. This would be the last word on twentieth-century Communism—and shouldn't the first words of any future analysis of this bloody phenomenon be: "The founder of the Soviet Communist state was bought at auction by capitalists and displayed . . ."—Where? I'm not sure, but we could have an ideological Graceland on our hands. We'd charge admission to make the investment back: maybe 15 bucks for the general public; 30 for former Communists and other sympaticos. We could have a bust of Joe McCarthy overlooking the body, because we won and we can do any damn thing we like.

Or, if we want the investment back quick, we can sell the body for parts (aren't there still some who would pay dearly for parts of their evil saint?), but we would save and prominently display the buttocks, for, uh, posterity.

Faithfully,
Paul Matulic
New York, N.Y.

Dear Mr. Buckley:

Please disregard my letter of yesterday. The only thing that eases the disappointment of learning that we can't get our hands on Lenin is realizing that I was spoofed by a Buckley. I recommend that we nominate Christopher Buckley for a Nobel Prize for Pranks (they should have one, don't you think?)

Warm regards,
Paul Matulic
New York, N.Y.

Dear Mr. Matulic: My son's prank (*FYI Magazine*) in reporting that the remains of Lenin would be auctioned was a howling success. But I like very much your idea of having him turn in his grave for the rest of time. You might pass that along to Yeltsin as a compromise: Leave him where he is, but visitors would now see him turning on that spit. Cordially,

**—WFB**



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# ON THE SCENE

## Russia's Identity Crises

ELISABETH RUBINFIEN

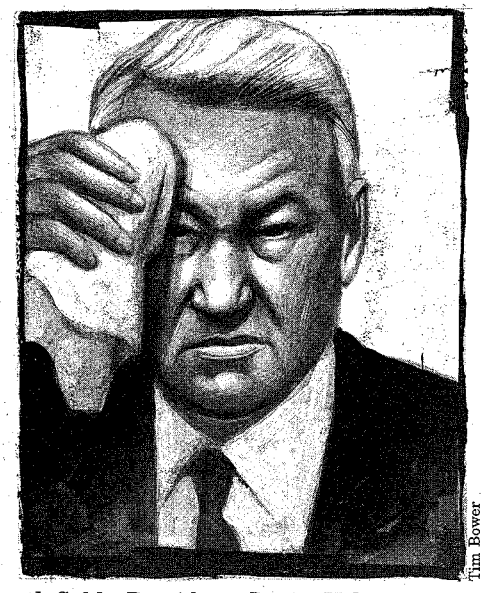
Moscow

THE Russian Congress of People's Deputies had already been meeting for nearly two weeks when delegates found it necessary to spend a full day discussing what to call their country. After a few hours, they agreed on the "Federative State of Russia." But after the lunch break, they voted again and settled on plain "Russia." Before the end of the day, a masterful display of democracy *à la russe* had resulted in the decision to let the country have two names—the Russian Federation, and Russia.

The to-and-froing and the ultimate non-result epitomize the identity crisis played out in the Grand Kremlin Palace this month. In its first meeting since the collapse of the Soviet Union, the country's highest legislature grappled with the most basic questions: what kind of economy to strive for, and what kind of democracy to build. And as with the naming question, these have been resolved with compromises. The vast nation has shifted an important step forward, but most of the root problems remain in place.

In part, this is inevitable. Seven decades of Soviet Communist dictatorship on top of centuries of czarist autocracy have not created a fertile soil for a free-market economy and Western democracy. The fact that the adversaries were able to reach a compromise at all is an important step. Decades have been spent here arguing within an ideological framework that believed in a single righteous truth. There was no place for compromise, only for victory and defeat.

Still, the compromises that emerged leave everyone claiming a partial victory, yet certain to return to the battlefield. President Boris Yeltsin and his team won an explicit statement of support from the Congress but attached to it was an implicit deadline of July, when the Congress can start demanding an accounting once again. The Congress passed in principle a new draft constitution, marking its first legal step out of the Soviet era. But the draft doesn't clarify the crucial problem of which institution—the presidency or the parliament—will have primary power.


Tim Bower

A president at odds with a congress is a familiar if frustrating part of established democracies. But here it highlights the half-revolution that Russia has experienced. The failed coup allowed Mr. Yeltsin and his men to sweep away the Communist Party and ultimately the Soviet Union. But it left intact a host of institutions of the Communist era, principally the Congress of People's Deputies and the standing Parliament that comes from its ranks. Its members were elected in the spring of 1990, when the Communist Party still enjoyed a virtual monopoly. So although the Communist Party has ceased to exist formally and its fragments could not reasonably expect to win more than 10 per cent of a popular vote, its members hold at least half of the Congress seats. Hard-core Communists make up about one-third of the 1,049 deputies. Their antipode—the radical democrats—number slightly less. In between are collective-farm directors, factory managers, and other place-holders whose confusion makes them malleable by both sides. All this has made the Parliament and the Congress less than useful forums for advancing reforms like land privatization or lifting the last state controls over prices.

Last fall Mr. Yeltsin persuaded the deputies to grant him the power to legislate by decree and to form his government without their oversight. He used those powers to put in place a cabinet with a core of young reformers led by economist Yegor Gaidar. That cabinet quickly wrote up a series of decrees, beginning with price liberalization. Mr. Yeltsin's team went into this Congress session determined to defend the economic reforms against a concerted attack. The Communists were out to reverse it all.

Into this came the Parliament chairman, Ruslan Khasbulatov. A very clever fellow from the North Caucasus mountains, he has at crucial moments—such as last August—supported Boris Yeltsin. But he harbors his own ambitions. With the help of the muddled middle, Mr. Khasbulatov was determined to curb Mr. Yeltsin's team without crossing the brink of outright confrontation with the still popular president.

The Congress session started out on a pattern familiar from earlier Russian congresses. Foreign observers and Russian pundits watched it unfold—a slow start and then several heated days of confrontation. The next step, we were sure, was for a dictatorial Mr. Yeltsin to step in with a rousing speech that would make it clear which way the truth lay, so the deputies could know how to vote.

This time, however, Boris Nikolayevich stayed home. On the first Saturday, conservatives, aided by Mr. Khasbulatov, pushed through a resolution that if implemented would gut the economic reform program. Mr. Gaidar and his team offered their resignations. Mr. Yeltsin said nothing.

The second week opened with a

*Miss Rubinfien is a Moscow correspondent for the* Wall Street Journal.



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cocky Mr. Khasbulatov insulting Mr. Gaidar et al., calling them "boys." The boys stormed out of the hall. Still no word from the president.

Mr. Yeltsin's absence sparked the flurry of rumors that he was suffering from a week-long hangover. In the end he proved himself to be smarter than he sometimes looks. By keeping his distance, he let his economic-reform team take the heat. By letting the tension grow, he drove his adversary, Mr. Khasbulatov, to an embarrassing extreme. When it was all over, the president not only didn't look dictatorial, he looked fairly presidential.

His stature will help reforms move forward. But the matter of the new constitution must be settled before change can have a legal basis. The president's men want a new constitution to give the presidency powers that critics say would make it tantamount to a monarchy. The draft passed in principle proposes a system somewhere between the American and the French. In any case it will be months before the constitution is finished.

In the meantime, frustrated radical democrats propose a most primitive form of democracy to resolve the underlying debate—take it to the people. But few middle-grounders will go along because most fear they will lose their seats if the referendum triggers a new election. Even Mr. Yeltsin's government figures such a poll will cost too much money even if the government comes out stronger.

They would rather bank on time. Mr. Gaidar expects the precipitous decline in industrial production to level off after the third quarter. Produce markets are always fuller in late summer and early fall. By the time the next regular Congress comes around, in six months, they hope to be able to cite real improvements.

The hard-liners are angered by the compromise, but some manage to summon up a reading that gives them a perverse kind of hope. It doesn't matter if the vaguely worded compromise means that the government has until the end of the year to work, said Viktor Aksyuchits, a top member of the alliance of so-called "patriotic" forces, "because by then the country, the government, Yeltsin, the whole thing will have collapsed anyway." □

# Throwing Stones

WILLIAM McGURN

WASHINGTON, D.C.

NOT LONG into George Bush's first summer in the Oval Office, Ann Stone approached Tony Zagotta about business. Zagotta had just arrived in D.C. as national chairman of the College Republicans, a staunchly Reaganite body. Ann Stone, who did direct-mail fundraising for a number of conservative organizations and was married to political consultant Roger Stone, was after a contract. And so at a barbecue in suburban Alexandria, Mrs. Stone asked him, "Have you ever thought of raising money on the pro-life issue?"

That, of course, was before she launched a much-publicized political-action committee called Republicans for Choice. The genesis of RFC, she says, was a suggestion over dinner by Republican National Committee chief Lee Atwater that the only way the party's pro-life position would change would be if someone, "preferably a female, with conservative credentials," got the ball rolling. Republicans for Choice was launched a few months later. The *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Newsweek*, and others gave Mrs. Stone nice coverage, quoting her threat to raise $1.5 to $3 million.

Chang Park

That was two years ago, and RFC is still around—and so are the skeptics. A former employer, *Human Events*, quoted her as likening the unborn to "rock formations that look like people" in response to a question whether she was troubled by photos that show clearly defined hands and feet on fetuses (an "inappropriate analogy," she concedes). The *Legal Times* followed with a harsh assessment of RFC's finances, though this has been tempered by a rebuttal and the promise of a more positive story to come. Even a generally favorable Style-section profile in the *Washington Post* was sprinkled with damning quotations about what the Clinton campaign would call "the character issue."

The irony is that most of the fire is coming from other pro-choice groups. "I suppose that if I were them [pro-choicers] and someone like me came along, I would have the same reaction," she says, sitting in her townhouse office, a national monument and former slave house in Old Town. On the wall behind her are photographs of her with Reagan, one of Jack Kemp, and a host of other conservative memorabilia. "I mean, if Abbie Hoffman walked into NATIONAL REVIEW and said he was on your side, wouldn't *you* be a little skeptical at first?"

In Ann Stone's case, the skepticism hasn't abated much, not least because of the frequent accusation that she plays different tunes for different audiences. While she says RFC is interested in a Big Tent, and she told a convention of Young Americans for Freedom that she respected pro-lifers' convictions, she has referred to "Religious Right, anti-choice fanatics like Phyllis Schlafly"—though she toned down her language when Representative Bob Dornan (R., Calif.) complained. In her office here, as in statements to Republican groups, she says she wants the Republican Party to be the party of choice and fewer abortions, yet she appeared at a Wichita rally to endorse Dr. George Tiller, famous for performing late-term abortions, and more recently delivered the keynote address at a Planned Parenthood luncheon in Dallas. Similarly, she stresses in an interview that this is a delicate moral issue, but in instructions to a conference of pro-choice activists she suggests approaching businessmen by

*Mr. McGurn is* NR*'s Washington Bureau Chief.*



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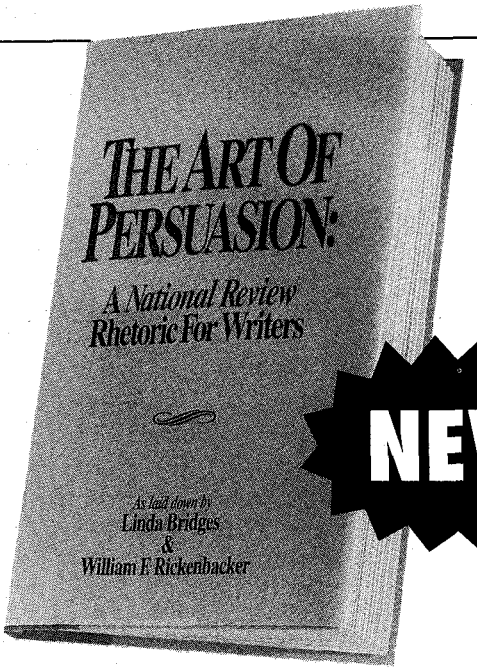


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telling them that money should be spent on competitiveness, not wasted on children. "Admittedly this is not very humanitarian sounding," says the note. "But it is what fiscal/business people need to know." And in defending her use of her own companies to do RFC business, she makes a big point of saying that all but one of the people involved are pro-choice; in other words, for the cause. Yet she has just signed on to run the senatorial campaign of pro-lifer Steve Sydness, running in North Dakota. "That's business," she says.

Ditto with the Atwater anecdote. The story is not impossible, but with Atwater no longer around it's decidedly convenient. And none of those close to him heard it until after his death. Sally Atwater says she doesn't remember it and won't comment. Mary Matalin, his right hand at the RNC, didn't hear of it until after his death. Nor did Jeanie Austin, co-chair of the RNC: "I can't say it didn't happen. But when I read it in the *Post* that's the first I heard of it."

But the most contentious claims revolve around the moolah. Federal Election Commission documents show that of the $987,400 RFC raised in 1990 and 1991, only 8.9 per cent went to candidates. Mrs. Stone defends herself by saying that this is the nature of direct mail, that her percentages are in the ballpark for such groups, and that electing candidates is not even her stated goal (on the question of electing pro-choice delegates to the GOP convention—which *is* a stated goal—she refuses to give figures). All true enough, particularly that direct mail doesn't yield that much net. But if it is all but impossible to reach her stated goal of $1.5 to $3 million through direct mail alone, shouldn't she be out there soliciting funds from foundations?

To understand why this raises eyebrows, you have to know how direct mail works and how RFC is set up. Although Ann Stone the chairman of Republicans for Choice gets not a penny for her efforts, Ann Stone the owner or part-owner of direct-mail-related businesses does. There is nothing illegal here. It's just that the client and the firm do not always have the same interests, particularly if the firm is paid per piece. Even if a direct-mail piece loses money for the client, the vendor may still make money.

A glance at RFC's most recent FEC monthly statement illustrates the point. RFC took in $33,674.99. Among the payments listed are $10,458.71 to Ann Stone and Associates, $695.46 to Unique Graphics, and $628.09 to Capstone Lists. Also listed are debts to these three Stone-owned or -operated companies of $736.13, $667.44, and $5,903.25 respectively—not a bad chunk of the action.

Mrs. Stone defends her decision to use her companies on several counts. First, as mentioned above, it guarantees that nearly everyone involved is pro-choice. Second, the only alternative would be Democratic firms. Third, her firm was rated tops in its field, and RFC should benefit. As to the amounts, she points out that federal law requires that her firms charge RFC the market rate. That's true. But the use of her businesses still creates powerful incentives at odds with the interests of RFC—for example, mailing to an expensive but marginal list that might not yield many contributions but still pays the firms. She's not saying what lists she has used.

In the end, it depends on which Ann Stone you believe. There's Ann Stone the hard-nosed entrepreneur, who doesn't let political differences get in the way of making a buck. And there's Ann Stone the head of Republicans for Choice, who believes the right to an abortion is worth fighting for in the GOP and advances conservative arguments on its behalf. "I believe in moral leadership, personal responsibility, and more pro-active language on things like abstinence to make fewer abortions," she says. "Laws don't make people moral."

Good point. And not bad for business, either. □

# Winning in Spite of Themselves

ANTHONY LEJEUNE

LONDON

"LOVE TANGLE Millionaire Shot Dead," cried the newspaper placards in London on the afternoon of Election Day, signaling the return to normal after a tedious month of nothing but party politics. This was followed, a few hours later, by even more sensational grounds for relief. It might have seemed incredible that Britain would go against the whole tendency of the Western world and vote for socialism, higher taxes, and less free enterprise, but the polls were suggesting that just such folly was about to occur.

Several highly paid authors and actors had written articles explaining why they were keen to pay more tax to soothe their social consciences, nobody apparently having told them that they could pay as much as they liked immediately without involving others whose consciences might be less pink. More surprisingly, the *Financial Times* came out in favor of Labour, for no clear reason except that it was time for a change.

Only as results replaced forecasts on the television screen did the scale of the pollsters' error become clear. The Conservatives lost a lot of the parliamentary seats they had won in the Thatcher landslide of 1987, but they finished with a majority that should keep John Major at Downing Street for at least three or four years.

In the exuberance of their relief, many Conservatives promptly dismissed the shadows that had previously alarmed them. The campaign, they now said, had been skillful, and John Major had emerged as a brilliant leader. The literal soapbox from which he had addressed the crowd in one or two rallies was hailed as a masterly symbol of the great man's common touch. All of which is nonsense.

As one of the more sensible pundits observed, "The Tories at the moment sound—because they are—intellectually incoherent. They are simultaneously in favor of high levels of public spending and the rigorous control of public spending, of low interest rates and a huge Public-Sector Borrowing Requirement, of individual self-reliance and an extended welfare state."

Labour, meanwhile, having abandoned its Marxist principles, offered no justification for a concept of "fairness" which involves not only taking money from one section of the commu-

*Mr. Lejeune is* NR*'s longtime London correspondent.*



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nity and giving it to another, but taking the power of decision away from citizens and giving it to civil servants. No evidence was presented for Labour's continued belief that governments are better at running the country's business than businessmen.

The Liberal Democrats wobbled about in the middle as usual, declaring as usual that this election would be their great breakthrough, and in the event losing much of their vote to the more red-blooded Labour Party.

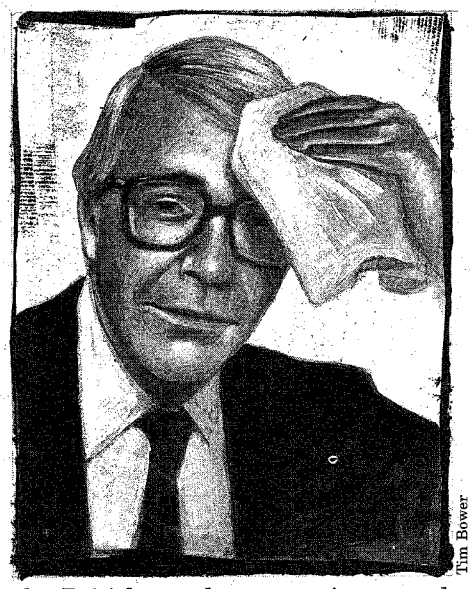
No party dealt seriously with the real economic crisis brought about by excessive government spending and by the high interest rates that resulted from locking the pound into the European Exchange Rate Mechanism; or with the problem in general of Britain's relationship to an increasingly federalist, protectionist Europe; or with defense in an obviously unstable world. Awkward members of each party, who might have raised such disruptive questions, were ruthlessly kept away from the press.

As for Mr. Major, he continues to be an appalling public performer. His famous "niceness," however, was admittedly worth a lot of votes. By contrast, Neil Kinnock, the Labour Party leader, appeared unattractively glib. "He would boil his own granny down for glue to win votes," a Scottish Nationalist said.

Major's dullness made him seem the safer option. He was in favor of low taxes and (he said) nil inflation, whereas the Labour Party openly wanted higher taxes and (according to its chief financial spokesman) would be quite happy with "reasonable" inflation. Both parties offered more public spending, but Labour's promises were vast, including four new government ministries, 33 new governmental organizations, and 80 separate pledges of extra money, to be paid for by "growth" or taxing "the rich."

The business community overwhelmingly—as much as 87 per cent was claimed—backed the Conservatives. The Labour Party had the support of all those groups which, in one way or another, live on taxpayers' cash. The public-sector trade unions ran expensive and thoroughly dishonest anti-Tory campaigns, asserting that the Conservatives would privatize the Health Service and starve the schools of money.

As the mist in the crystal ball clears away, the reasons for what happened emerge quite simply. The Labour Party committed suicide with its "alternative budget," in which—bravely, people said at the time—it spelled out the tax proposals that would be immediately implemented if Labour won. These amounted to a big increase in tax for anyone earning even slightly above the average income, and a decrease in tax or an increase in benefits for the rest that came, in many cases, to no more than twopence a week. The arithmetic of redistribution inevitably produces this kind of disproportionate loss and gain; its chief appeal is to envy rather than philanthropy, and



Tim Bower

the British people are not in a mood for class war. Class war against Mr. Major would, anyway, be absurd.

The right-wing and middle-of-the-road press brought these points out strongly, hammering them through with unprecedented zeal, not perhaps not unconnected with the fact that Labour was proposing to add around 19 per cent to the marginal tax rate of every senior journalist in Britain.

Here, the newspapers, and especially the despised tabloids, fought precisely the campaign the Conservative Party should have been waging. Day after day they did the arithmetic, pursued the implications, and blazoned the effect of the Labour policies. On the morning before the election, the *Daily Mail*'s front page was black-edged and headed with the single word: WARNING. And it worked. Enough floating voters, including many from the chattering classes who may previously have believed they were going to vote Labour or Liberal Democratic, found themselves looking into the abyss of what a Kinnock government would really mean.

It does not follow that the Labour Party, or even that socialist ideology, has become permanently unelectable. According to the *Evening Standard*'s calculations, half the working population of Britain is employed by the state, and many of the other half are dependent on subsidies and welfare payments; which renders them a natural constituency for Labour. Even under Mrs. Thatcher this constituency was never diminished, and Mr. Major's approach seems unlikely to make inroads into the dependency culture. Sir Leo Pliatzky, a former senior civil servant at the Treasury, once compared politicians thirsting to spend public money to elephants at a waterhole: "You drive them off, and drive them off, and every day they are back again." John Major has already invented a new Cabinet Minister for Fun, with responsibility for sport, the arts, and a national lottery.

The object of this rather unconservative innovation was partly to flatter the insatiable subsidy-seekers of the arts lobby and partly to show that Mr. Major himself has enthusiasms beyond those of a national bank manager. The line-up of his administration in general is sensible and not very interesting. The two women in the cabinet are there chiefly because they are women. A couple of Thatcherites are in positions sufficiently important to reassure the right wing of the party that all is not lost, and there are several "wets" to assure the left wing that something has been gained. Of Mr. Major's rivals for the leadership, one, Douglas Hurd, a steady man, remains at the Foreign Office: the other, the flamboyant Michael Heseltine, will be an interventionist Secretary of State for Industry.

The task for the Conservatives is as much philosophical as practical. They must tackle the consequences of their own recent profligacy; but they should also face the evident truth that conservatism, although it bore fruit under Mrs. Thatcher, still has only a very shallow grip in the electoral earth. After a salutary fright the Conservatives won this election because Labour, egged on by the polls, threw it away. If they are to win another, they must sell ideas ahead of policies. But philosophers among Mr. Major's associates are thin on the ground. □



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*Peru, Algeria, and After*

# CAN DEMOCRACY DRIVE FOREIGN POLICY?

The U.S. is committed to encouraging democracy. But events in Peru and in the Islamic world force the question: Might an obstinate insistence on democratic forms work against what we prize in democracy?

**ELLIOTT ABRAMS**

PESSIMISTS always said the Latin American pendulum would sooner or later swing away from democracy. Now, with Haiti reverting to form, Venezuela wobbly, and Peru gone, have they been proved right?

Not so fast. Haiti never was democratic, so its situation hardly indicates a great migration back to dictatorship. What we see in Peru and Venezuela is something new: what happens when social tension is sky high but a military coup is not widely favored.

In Venezuela, there is tremendous dissatisfaction with the government. Although President Bush years ago anointed Venezuela's President Carlos Andrés Pérez a modern-day Bolivar—man of principle, leader of democracy, vast influence beyond his country's borders—and still speaks with him regularly, Latins aren't fooled. Pérez has presided over vast corruption, and you cannot actually find a single Venezuelan who does not believe he enriched himself greatly.

Venezuela is not poor, but it has all too many poor people. Pérez's government has provided a happy hunting ground for a few super-rich families. This is not free-market capitalism, but the "crony capitalism" familiar from Ferdinand Marcos's Philippines. Pérez has spent long days traveling around telling Panamanians and Haitians how to solve their problems, but at home he has imposed widely resented austerity programs while the well-connected few still make fortunes.

With all this in mind, a coup attempt was not shocking. What was striking was that the larger portion of the army remained loyal to a president they don't like any more than the average civilian does. The conditions in today's Venezuela would have produced a successful coup ten or twenty years ago, and that they have not yet done so indicates that there is now considerable immunity to that particular disease. No one today imagines that a coup is a panacea, or that the military know how to solve economic problems. If a government can persuade the people that it is honestly battling with the nation's problems, it will be able to hang on. However, Pérez's reputation may already be too sullied, and the chances of another coup attempt are fairly high.

Peru is another story again. There, the government's main asset is President Alberto Fujimori's personal integrity and popularity. Fujimori, of Japanese descent, was an obscure college president until he ran for the country's presidency, and his victory was itself a measure of popular disgust with the political system. He governs as an outsider trying to cure the nation's ills: the people call him "*el Chinito*" ("the little Oriental"), and he refers to them in the third person as "*los Peruanos*." Fujimori's foreignness to Peru's politics is crucial to both his self-image and his popular image.

Fujimori has been desperately trying to cope with a lethal combination of poverty, drug trafficking, and terrorism. He has adopted a sound economic program, and won support from coca farmers for crop-substitution programs aimed at making them the government's allies rather than the object of "search and destroy" military missions. His adoption of Hernando de Soto's views on the "informal" economy has added to his popular backing, as he undertook to give peasants title to land they farmed and to give the urban poor property rights as well. Even his tough economic program did not cut deeply into his public support, because Peruvians believed he was honestly trying to solve the country's myriad problems. And they saw no alternative—civilian or military—that was not much worse.

*Mr. Abrams is a Senior Fellow at the Hudson Institute.*



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But Fujimori became increasingly frustrated at—well, at being frustrated. By big businessmen who tried to hang on to their old sweetheart deals with state agencies. By labor leaders and leftists opposed to economic reform. By a corrupt judicial system that has released scores of terrorists back onto the streets. By a congress playing politics-as-usual while the coca flowed, the bombs exploded, and the poor grew poorer.

So Fujimori carried out an "*autogolpe*" (self-coup). It is not a military coup, for Fujimori, not the army (at least for now), is running the show. He closed the Congress, fired half the Supreme Court, and imposed rule by decree for a year and a half.

## *'Good for Him'*

WHAT SHOULD we make of it? First, unscientific evidence indicates that Fujimori's moves are popular. Opposition politicians admit this freely—in private. The amazed American press acknowledges it. Fujimori has said he will hold a plebiscite, and everyone agrees he will win it. So this will soon become a form of plebiscitary democracy, very different from a typical Latin military regime.

Second, it may well be that Peru's weak, corrupt "democratic" institutions were simply incapable of coping with its crises, which were the worst in Latin America. Peru's state was not too powerful, but too weak: unable to collect taxes, unable to maintain order, with many elected or appointed officials bought or rented by the rich. When I asked one Peruvian friend about dismissing half the Supreme Court, he laughed and replied, "Yes. He fired the corrupt half, and good for him!" If Fujimori can use the time he has bought to build more honest and efficient state institutions, Peru will have gained much.

But can he? His chosen tool, the military, is as corrupt and ineffective as the ones he has gotten rid of. Can you use soot to scour pots and pans? Moreover, limits on political liberties, especially when enforced by a pre-modern police force and army, can soon deteriorate into human-rights abuses that we will be obliged to denounce. The campaign against the fierce *Sendero Luminoso* (Shining Path) guerrillas depends on the army's ability to distinguish innocent peasant from secret *Sendero* militant. If the army fails in this, it will compromise support for the campaign, and Fujimori will face the danger of becoming a rather more familiar type of Latin dictator, dependent on the army for survival.

For the United States, the problem is how to respond. Can one show any understanding of Fujimori's action without encouraging similar coups in other nations? Conversely, if we denounce Fujimori and cut off our aid, are we helping Peru cope with its massive social crisis?

There is no way an American can approve of such undemocratic procedures, but the protests should be low-key. Fujimori is tacitly saying that order and economic progress are being put before democracy, and of course we always say *nothing* comes before democracy. But, in truth, Mexico's President Salinas is following the same path: he is introducing a free economy much faster than free elections. Because Salinas is honest and clearly dedicated to an economic program of which we approve, denunciations of Mexico are rare in Washington. Moreover, this general approach worked reasonably well in Taiwan and South Korea, where economic progress constitutes the base upon which stable democracy is being built. Nor have we insisted on absolute purity elsewhere. When the results of a truly free and fair election in Algeria produced an Islamic fundamentalist victory, we stood silent as that victory was annulled by the current government and the army.

We were fortunate in the 1980s to face the problem of helping various countries that were emerging from dictatorship to democracy. We enthusiastically learned how to cajole, give incentives and rewards, and provide moral and material help to democratic activists. The hard part comes now. Some of those countries will slip backward, and we must distinguish cases where we think the coup was unforgivable from those where retrogression was nearly inevitable and the new regime is in some sense still an honest and modernizing government. We must decide where to apply sanctions, and where to rebuke but not punish.

Chicago Tribune
I HAD TO... IT RAN OUT OF GAS, AND ALL THE ASHTRAYS WERE FULL.
PERU TOURS
Alberto Fujimori—YOUR DRIVER
DEMOCRACY

Our reaction to Fujimori's moves in Peru should have two aspects. First, we should carefully distinguish the Peruvian case from every single other Latin case. No other country has the horrible combination of poverty, drugs, and terrorism found there. Let the punishment fit the crime: compromising democracy in Peru is less blameworthy than a similar action would be in Chile or Venezuela. Second, let us strictly hold Fujimori to account *by his own standards*. If he defends himself by his



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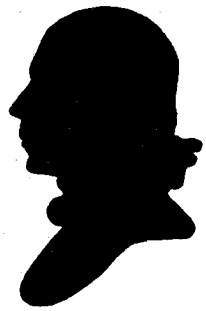

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call for honest government, let us demand that he impose it. If he says he will vigorously fight *Sendero*, let us ask him how the campaign is going. If he says economic reforms will now come faster, we should press for that fast action. And above all, we should insist on respect for human rights. Nothing Fujimori proposes to do requires or permits indiscriminate violence or an end to freedom of speech and of the press. We can fairly ask that he keep to a minimum his interference with Peruvian democracy—in fact, a concern for human rights is critical to Fujimori's success. Nothing would be easier now than a slow slippage toward old-fashioned military rule, with the desire for order replacing the need for reforms. If we can help Peru and Fujimori avoid this, our nagging will have a positive effect. Mere sermons about democracy will not. □

# ISLAM AND DEMOCRACY

**PETER W. RODMAN**

MORE THAN a dozen years after the Iranian revolution, it is now clear that Islamic fundamentalism has spread to the Sunni world as well as the Shiite, and is a growing factor in regions far afield, from North Africa to the Israeli-occupied West Bank to Afghanistan to the Muslim republics of the former Soviet Union. It is filling the vacuum left by the discrediting of other outlets for popular frustration, such as Pan-Arabism, nationalism, and Arab "socialism." On its face, the Islamic trend looks to replace those "isms" as the main strategic threat to moderate or pro-Western governments in these regions.

It is, of course, an ironic turn. With the end of the cold war, our values have triumphed. We won not only a geopolitical victory over the Soviet Union but a victory in a two-hundred-year struggle of ideas in Western thought, between theories of collective will dating to the French Revolution and theories of individual liberty dating to the American. Yet now the West finds itself challenged from outside by a militant, atavistic force driven by hatred of *all* Western political thought, harking back to age-old grievances against Christendom.

Thoughtful observers have cautioned that this Islamic revival is a powerful popular trend with deep-seated social, economic, cultural, historical, and political causes. Experienced analysts strongly urge that we not prejudge Islam as our "new enemy" replacing Soviet Communism, as if we are always in need of some enemy. The phenomenon has already taken a variety of forms, not all of them self-evidently capable of or even interested in injuring us. These analysts point out that, in any case, the Islamic trend cannot be combatted by conventional means of foreign policy, and that it is, rather, a historical phase that must be endured until it loses its momentum, perhaps by virtue of its own failure to solve its societies' problems.

This is all wise advice. There is no comfort for the policy-maker, however, in the knowledge that this new source of anti-American radicalism, now expanding in strategic regions of the world, might exhaust itself in twenty years or so. How do we deal with it now? From the tenor of some of the scholarly discussion, one might conclude that the West has no option but to concede its legitimacy and learn to live with it.

In truth, we are under no such obligation. We are entitled to defend ourselves. The perplexed policy-maker would do well to start from that premise; then certain guidelines for policy emerge clearly.

First, it is true that we should not initiate hostility where there is none. If any Islamic political movement or regime is prepared to coexist with the West according to the normal rules of international behavior, we should respond accordingly. As the Bush Administration has indicated with repect to post-Khomeini Iran, *we should be prepared to have whatever kind of relationship with Islamic forces that they are prepared to have with us.* The burden of making the relationship a hostile one should rest with them.

Second, however, *we cannot avoid taking their ideology seriously.* While there is no automatic reason why Islam must replace Soviet Communism in our demonology, we should not ignore that militant revolutionary ideologies in fact share certain characteristics; U.S. policy could do worse than apply some of the lessons we learned from our 75-year experience with our Marxist–Leninist foes. Where a radical anti-Western philosophy is coupled with concretely hostile policies, we have a problem. There are those in northwest Asia, for example, who would like to create an Islamic "northern tier," expanding into the ex-Soviet Muslim republics, to challenge all the major powers. The Algerian situation is already intimidating neighboring countries and is being treated in Europe (especially in France) as a serious strategic problem.

Among those very scholars who profess to be the most sympathetic to the Islamic phenomenon, there is sometimes a tendency to dismiss its philosophy as mere rhetorical enthusiasm. Admittedly a non-expert, I would think it patronizing and even insulting to assume that Islamic fundamentalists do not really believe the most basic element of their philosophy—namely, rejection of the West as corrupt and evil. Much of the Islamic world is rent by social divisions, frustrated by its material in-

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feriority to the West, bitter at Western cultural influence, and driven by its resentments (what Bernard Lewis calls the "politics of rage"). Its virulent anti-Westernism does not look like just a tactic.

The same Iran that helped obtain the release of hostages in Lebanon, ostensibly to improve its relations with the West, is also turning the Sudan into a terrorist base to destabilize the Arab world and Africa, and is going all out to obtain nuclear weapons, ballistic missiles, and a massive conventional arsenal. With its arch-rival Iraq weakened since the Gulf War, to what end is this military power being accumulated if not to intimidate our friends and dominate the Middle East? Iran must still be judged a strategic menace—driven by its ideology to be the scourge of the West.

Third is the question of Islamic movements that come to power by electoral means. Here is where the intellectual confusion is most rampant. *A political movement may come into power through a democratic procedure and yet not be democratic.* The test of a movement's nature is not how it first acquires power but what it does with it once it acquires it. Hitler won an election; was Nazism democratic? The gushing over the recent Iranian election, won by Rafsanjani's "moderates," is inappropriate. Have we totally lost sight of what *constitutional* democracy really means—political pluralism, limitations on governmental power, guarantees of individual and minority rights, the possibility of alternation of parties in office? No significant Islamic leader has ever subscribed to these principles. It is much more the norm that Islamic parties, once in control, seek out of moral duty to make wholesale institutional changes that negate the possibility of their ever being removed from power (whatever factional divisions may still be tolerated). As Marxist–Leninists used to do, they seek not only structural political changes but also dominance of the educational system and cultural life to stifle pluralism. Such movements are not worthy of enormous deference from us for their political virtue. Just ask Salman Rushdie. The abject quality of some of our public discussion on this subject represents a collapse of our reasoning power, if not of our belief in our own values. A movement that so obviously rejects democracy as we know it need not be treated as anything but an adversary of our most basic principles.

Fourth, how can we encourage more moderate behavior? Although our influence is limited, even militant movements in their youthful phase are not immune to the external environment, especially in their external conduct. Nor should one dismiss out of hand the likelihood that there are relative "moderates" and relative "radicals" in such a movement. At any given time, even under Khomeini, Iran's regime wrestled with tough decisions about how to respond to external events.

The answer, of course, is not to look for three guys in the leadership entourage whose status might possibly be enhanced by showing up at staff meetings with TOW missiles and who could therefore be counted on to reverse the regime's most fundamental policies. Rather, *the way to help the moderates and weaken the radicals in a revolutionary movement is to demonstrate that radical policies are counterproductive.* That is, hostile foreign-policy moves must be fiercely resisted by the West, indeed punished. The more it can be demonstrated that such moves involve a cost, the stronger the arguments of moderates become.

Fifth, *Western fatalism about the inevitability of the Islamic trend is a grave disservice to the millions of moderate, modern men and women in Muslim countries whose own reasons to fear fundamentalism are even greater than ours.* Our masochistic acceptance of the legitimacy of the anti-Western trend would not help those resisting it on the front line. Appeasement would sacrifice them, as well as our own principles.

Finally, *we should be wary of pushing friendly governments into risky experiments.* Traditional governments in the Middle East, often tribally based, may well have their own social contract and their own accountability even if they don't observe all the Western electoral forms. Western conservatives can appreciate how difficult it is to meld tradition and modernization while preserving social stability. As with the Shah's Iran, it is a mistake to accelerate the delegitimization of governments that seem not to meet our standards, only to have them replaced by something infinitely worse. We should approach with a certain humility the dilemmas of moderate governments that choose to react sternly against forces determined to destroy them.

The Saudi rulers, in particular, are under pressure simultaneously from two directions: first, from a Westernized, progressive intelligentsia that seeks a greater political role, and second from Islamic forces at the grass roots that denounce the regime as already too progressive and too obsequious to the satanic West. The status quo—the royal monopoly of power—may well be untenable. Perhaps the Saudis need to do what the Shah failed to do—namely, co-opt the intelligentsia through political reforms as an ally against the obscurantists. But the political opening that King Fahd has undertaken is a risky venture. We are right to welcome it—and to refrain from further pressures.

## *Faith in Ourselves*

OUR RESPONSE to Islamic fundamentalism, in sum, is not only a question of foreign-policy tactics but a question of our faith in ourselves. We should not be burdened by guilt: Are our friends too undemocratic? Isn't it all due to real grievances? Aren't we being culturally arrogant? Aren't we prejudging a phenomenon that may turn out benign? This is nonsense. A movement whose most fundamental principle is resentment of the West and the *best* of what the West stands for need not be indulged. We may well have to coexist with it in a literal sense for an extended period, but the notion of coexisting peacefully is more our concept than it is theirs. The rage against us is too great, as is the concrete threat of the nuclear, conventional, and terrorist weapons it continues to marshal in the service of its rage. □



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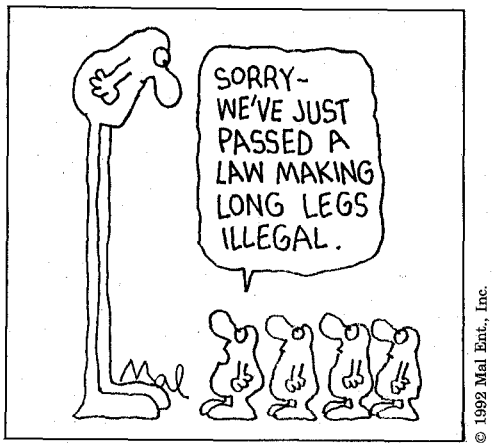


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SOME ASSEMBLY REQUIRED

### *At the Second Turn*

Democrats in mournful numbers
  Pray it's just a wakeful dream,
As the two remaining trigger
  Nightmares and a nascent scream.

W. H. VON DREELE

*"You have much to learn, my son. You can't say 'On with his head' after you've said 'Off with his head.'"*



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WHY DID YOU DECIDE NOT TO RE-ENTER THE RACE?
IT MIGHT HURT MY CHANCES.
TSONGAS

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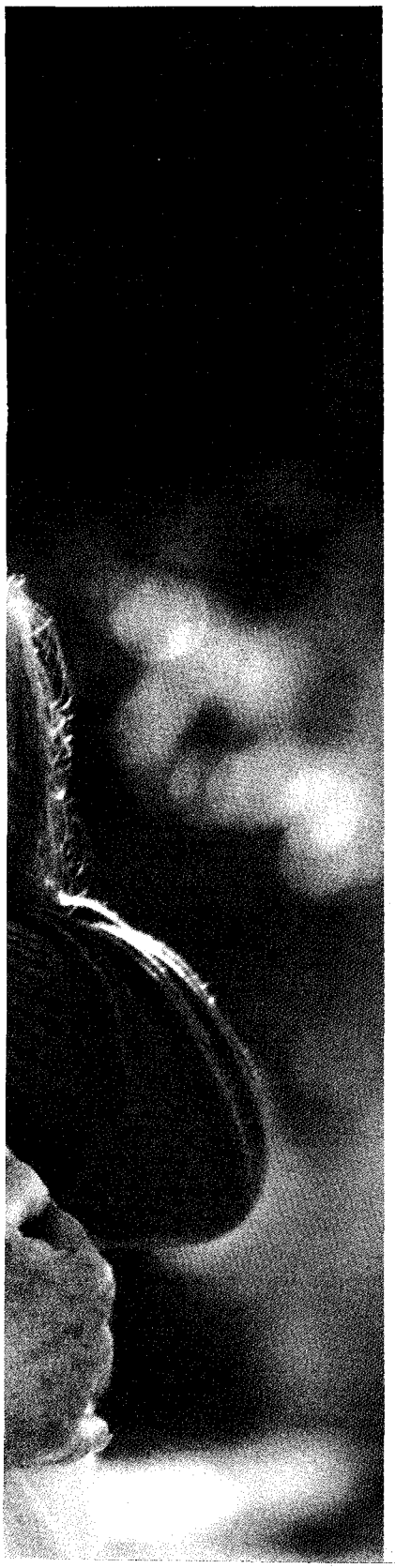

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*Kidlib and Mrs. Clinton*

# THE HAND THAT ROCKS THE CRADLE

Question: What's the difference between a children's-rights activist and a pit bull? Answer: You might get your child back from the pit bull.

**WALTER OLSON**

'HAVE you heard?" said little Flossie Bobbsey to her twin brother, Freddie. "After next year we'll get to sue the daylights out of Mom, Dad, and the babysitter!"

"What do you mean?" asked Freddie, a bit slow on the uptake ever since he developed his drug habit on the playground.

"It says here," Flossie replied, shaking her pretty curls with impatience, "that when Hillary Clinton is President kids are going to have rights like everyone else."

"I thought we already did," said Freddie, whose whims had seldom been opposed in seven years of progressive child-rearing.

"Some rights, but not as many as we might," broke in his older sister, Nan, the studious one. "Legally, we still have to mind our parents."

"That's where *The New York Review of Books* comes in," added her twin brother, Bert, waving a copy of the prestigious intellectual fortnightly.

The children crowded round as Bert quoted from an article by a man named Garry Wills. " 'In the past,' Mr. Wills says, a child's rights 'were asserted vicariously through the parent. Ms. Clinton sees those rights as, at times, to be asserted against the parent. This has always been recognized in abuse cases, but she would extend it much farther.' "

"How much farther?" Freddie wanted to know. But Mr. Wills didn't explain; he just went on about how this Hillary Clinton lady was "one of the more important scholar-activists of the last two decades . . . surprisingly successful at winning support for programs that have a radical basis."

"I think he's sweet on her," Freddie scoffed.

"This may help," said Nan, reaching for her copy of *Children's Rights: Contemporary Perspectives*, a volume of essays put out by Teacher's College Press in 1979. She turned to Mrs. Clinton's contribution. " 'Children should have a right to be permitted to decide their own future if they are competent.' But the current law presumes they aren't. So Mrs. Clinton proposes 'to reverse the presumption of incompetency and instead assume all individuals are competent until proven otherwise.' "

"Great!" exclaimed 14-year-old Bert. "Then we could apply for our own credit cards at the mall."

"And smoke and drink," said Freddie, ever the eager substance abuser.

"And vote," said Flossie. "And best of all, drive."

"Hurrah!" the kids shouted.

"Not so fast," said Nan. "It seems there are exceptions. Mrs. Clinton says here that a newborn baby isn't competent."

"Aw, she must have seen one at some point."

" 'It is more difficult,' she goes on, 'to prove a 12-year-old child totally incompetent, and I think impossible to presume the typical 16-year-old incompetent.' "

## *Can't We Sue?*

THE OLDER twins looked triumphant over this, while a pall fell over the younger ones, who would not reach even the age of 12 for some years to come. "Does this mean we *can't* sue Mom?" asked Flossie, who had a score to settle over a forced early bedtime the previous week.

"Maybe someone else can sue for you," said Bert. "We have it direct from Mrs. Clinton that some decisions 'should not be made unilaterally by parents.' "

Flossie asked what decisions these were. Some of them, it turned out, regarded surgical procedures that the children agreed were "yucky." But the list of disputable areas also took in "schooling," "employment," and other matters "where the decision or lack of one will significantly affect the child's future."

"We're in luck!" Bert cried. "Nan can sue Dad over that summer job he wants her to take. And I can sue if

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*Mr. Olson, a Senior Fellow at the Manhattan Institute, is the author of* The Litigation Explosion: What Happened When America Unleashed the Lawsuit *(Truman Talley Books/E. P. Dutton).*



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they pack me off to the military academy."

"Are you sure?" Nan objected. "Mrs. Clinton says here that she'd 'prefer' that 'intervention into an on-going family be limited to decisions that could have long-term and possibly irreparable effects if they were not resolved.' "

But the other kids knew the answer to that one. "Psychological harm—psychological harm," they chanted, dancing in a little ring. "Long-term developmental trauma. Possibly irreparable emotional disability. We can sue over *anything*!"

"There's more," Nan said, when things had calmed down. "Suing Mom and Dad is just the start. We may have the right to sue people we've never even met. Mrs. Clinton writes about various 'recommendations' that a child be given legal rights to sue 'as against future technological changes that might damage him or her.' For example, children and grown-ups too 'might have special standing to question the proliferation of nuclear power or junk food because of the potential impact or at least unpredictable impact on their and their children's future development.' "

"And I thought Governor Brown was far out," Bert said. "That's just someone's recommendation, though. Does Mrs. Clinton agree with it?"

"She doesn't say, but you don't notice her doubled over laughing," said Nan. "All she says is that it's 'unlikely' these will be accepted as new legal causes of action."

"Why would kids sue *against* junk food?" asked Flossie, many of whose waking hours were spent in pursuit of that commodity. "I would sue to get more of it."

"Your mistake," said the superior Bert, "is to assume that the children's movement is run by children. When was the last time you saw an actual kid get upset over war toys?"

"Who does run it, then?"

"Some social-service types, a few professors," Nan said. "But it's mostly lawyers, lawyers, and more lawyers."

A shudder ran through the diminutive group.

"But why would they do these things?" asked Flossie. "There can't be much money in it."

"I don't know," said Nan, suddenly stumped. "Let's ask Uncle Mark."

The children rushed next door, and found their uncle at home. "Yes," he confirmed, "it's lawyers. The driving force in the children's-rights movement is the lawyers who keep suing to block welfare reform, to do away with local control of schools, to keep libraries from tossing out rowdy teenagers, to equalize funding here and expunge criminal records there. Power and ideology are the lure for many of them, more than money.

"It's not hard to become a children's lawyer. Under some laws nowadays, anyone at all can step forward to file a suit on behalf of kids in reform schools, whether the kids themselves give the go-ahead or not. You can imagine how many world-savers gravitate toward that. Then there are class actions claiming to represent all the kids in some category. One lawyer filed a suit supposedly on behalf of every female student in the Chicago schools. He wanted to force the merger of boys' and girls' sports teams.

"Many children's-rights advocates would like to get a separate lawyer appointed to represent the kids in each and every custody case."

"Mrs. Clinton seems to agree," Nan interrupted. "She says kids should be 'entitled to legal representation in any proceeding in which their interests are at stake.' That means representation against their parents' wishes."

"You mean if Mom and Dad split, some lawyer could get himself appointed claiming to represent us?" Flossie asked.

"Exactly," said Uncle Mark. "He could force you all to undergo weeks of sworn interrogation about what you've all said, thought, and done about and to each other, and make you submit to examination by psychiatrists and social workers. Even if your folks had agreed on the terms of a divorce settlement, he might hold up the process. But this sort of meddling wouldn't stop divorces—it would just make them more bitter."

"How could a lawyer hold up the settlement?" asked Flossie.

"Well," said Mark, "by demanding that the parents pay for counseling for the kids or set aside money for a college fund. He might threaten a motion to send the kids to foster care. Depending on how the law is set up, he might even force the parents to negotiate concerning his legal fees."

"Couldn't that sort of leverage be misused?" asked Bert.

"No shock, Sherlock. Whether for money or ideology, ambitious lawyers can find many angles in representing children in the absence of parents. The sympathy factor is just for starters. They also know that their client is unlikely to fire them or dictate their strategy.

"In fact, there's really no logical stopping point with children's-rights litigation. Most grown-ups try to avoid getting into lawsuits, or letting them drag on, because they know they're expensive and unpleasant. With a client who doesn't talk back, no one will call the lawyer off. He can sue until the other side is completely exhausted and broke and gives up."

## *Second Thoughts*

THE THOUGHT of depleting the parental bank account that paid for boxed juice and M. C. Hammer albums put the idea of suing Mom and Dad in a new and frankly less attractive light.

"Maybe Mrs. Clinton has changed her mind since 1979?" Flossie ventured.

"Not very likely," said Uncle Mark, "to judge by her record at the Children's Defense Fund and Legal Services Corporation. Those groups are dedicated to the notion that litigation is a wonderful way to solve society's problems, and the more of it there is the better, for children and everyone else.

"Earlier generations knew better. They knew that a lawsuit is one of the most disastrous things that can enter a child's life, so bad that it should be avoided except for the few times where the alternative is even worse. And they knew that in all but the most extreme cases, the parents who have raised a child know better what is in his interest than some government functionary brought in for the occasion, no matter how well-meaning he might be. Otherwise children might as well all be sent off to some universal orphanage."

"I still haven't figured out one thing," said Freddie. "Wasn't it Mrs. Clinton's *husband* who was running for President?"

All the children had a good laugh over that one, and Uncle Mark showed the youngster Mrs. Clinton's words in the *Washington Post*: "If you vote for him, you get me." □



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# REFORM AFOOT

The Feds helped lead the states into overspending, but the states aren't waiting to be led back out.

**STEPHEN MOORE**

"THE CURRENT welfare system is corrupt and morally bankrupt. It entraps our children in a cradle-to-grave dependency." Sound like a quote from Ronald Reagan or Charles Murray? It's not. It was a statement made by Jim Florio, Democratic governor of New Jersey, after he signed that state's historic welfare-reform bill in January. The new law reduces the disincentives for family unity in AFDC (Aid to Families with Dependent Children) and denies welfare mothers added benefits for having more children.

In Connecticut, Independent Governor Lowell Weicker—who, when he was a Republican senator, never met a social-spending program he didn't like—is championing similar welfare cutbacks. "In the 1980s when money rolled into the state in wheelbarrows there was little incentive to put the champagne bottle down and manage nickels," he told the legislature. "Every year saw more programs and higher benefits."

Connecticut and New Jersey are not alone. At least half the states, up to their eyeballs in debt, are starting a painful downsizing of government. They are experimenting with a wide variety of market-based policy prescriptions: privatization; supply-side tax cuts; welfare reforms that reward rather than destroy the work ethic; enterprise zones; and vouchers for education and health care. While George Bush and the Democratic Congress dismantle the arsenal of policy initiatives that were at the heart of the Reagan Revolution, these ideas have been enthusiastically resurrected in the states. "For the first time in a decade fiscal conservatives are setting the terms of the debate in the state capitols of America," notes Sam Brunelli, director of the American Legislative Exchange Council.

John Engler, the crusading new governor of Michigan, calls this "the counter-revolution in state government." His Reaganite reforms are driven not just by financial necessity, but also by the growing bipartisan recognition that most of the economic-development and social-welfare programs of the past two decades are simply not working. Take welfare. Welfare rolls have skyrocketed from 2 million families in 1970, to 3.5 million in 1980, to 4.6 million in 1990. The child of a parent on welfare is three times more likely to be on welfare as an adult. "The tragedy of the welfare state," suggests Tommy Thompson, Republican governor of Wisconsin, "is not how much it costs, but how little progress it has bought."

Or consider education. In the 1970s, as test scores plummeted, the educrats lectured that to improve the performance of the public schools the states needed to reduce class size, increase teacher pay, modernize facilities, expand curriculum, and so on. During the 1980s taxpayers quite willingly shelled out for all of these things. Per-pupil funding of public schools doubled; but test scores sank to new lows. In 1992 the educrats say that to improve the public schools the states need to reduce class size, increase teacher pay, and so on. But parents, taxpayers, and legislators are wising up, on this and other fronts. Here are some of the major themes of state government in the 1990s:

**Supply-Side Tax Cuts.** While George Bush and the Democrats continue to dither over whether to take a tiny sliver out of capital-gains taxes, Republican Governor William Weld of Massachusetts has proposed a zero state tax rate on long-held assets. Weld calls himself "a filthy supply-sider," and his actions confirm the label. He repealed Michael Dukakis's bon-voyage gift to the state: a billion-dollar value-added tax on state services. Scrapping the tax saved more than twenty thousand Massachusetts jobs as employers who were preparing to leave changed their minds.

In Michigan, the most pernicious taxes are its highest-in-the-nation property taxes. John Engler's "cut and cap" initiative would slash property taxes by 30 per cent and cap them at the inflation rate. In Oregon last year tax-weary voters, with the help of the National Taxpayers Union, made even deeper cuts. They approved a Proposition 13–type measure that slashes property taxes by a whopping 40 per cent over five years.

Why the sudden change of heart? In part because, as in Oregon, the taxpayers are letting it be known they've had enough. In part, though, it is because state lawmakers have observed the dismal economic performance of tax-raising states like California, Connecticut, and New Jersey. By passing a $7-billion tax hike last year Pete Wilson shattered the myth that California is recession-proof. After 25 years of virtually nonstop growth, California now has fewer jobs than it did this time last year. Almost daily, real-estate developers run ads in the *Los Angeles Times* suggesting that businesses escape to Reno, Seattle, or Salt Lake City; they have done so in droves. The Florio tax increases have had even more devastating effects on New Jersey, where business bankruptcies last year surged by 150 per cent, the unemployment rate climbed by almost two percentage points, and the state led the nation with 470,000 foreclosures. If this is "progressive liberalism," many governors are saying they want none of it.

**Welfare Reform.** In 1988 Tommy Thompson declared welfare "the enemy of the American dream." Since then he has pioneered a series of reforms that even the status-quo-oriented Bush Administration is now touting. His "Learnfare" program cuts welfare grants by 15 per cent for fami-

*Mr. Moore is director of fiscal-policy studies at the Cato Institute.*



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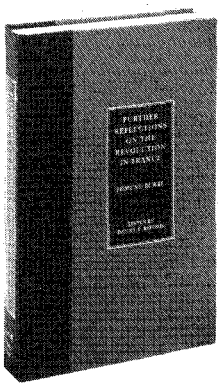

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lies whose children are habitually truant from school; it also cuts benefits by 45 per cent for teenage mothers who drop out of high school. Another Thompson proposal makes parents of teenage fathers financially liable for child support, and still another eliminates added benefits for welfare mothers who have another child.

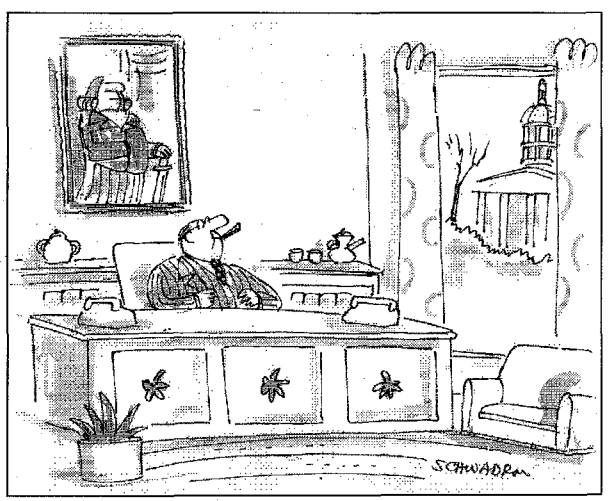
Thompson's path-breaking carrot-and-stick reforms have set off a torrent of welfare experimentation in other states. Ohio's Project Leap now pays teenage AFDC mothers an extra $60 per month for staying in school and docks their benefits by an equal amount for dropping out. Oregon voters have approved a new "Full Employment Program" which suspends all AFDC, unemployment insurance, and Food Stamp benefits and instead guarantees recipients a public- or private-sector job at 90 per cent of the state minimum wage. The state pays the wages for private-sector employers with the money saved from the welfare-grant reductions. Most dramatic of all, Michigan entirely eliminated general assistance for eighty thousand employable adults without children.

Now even California is overhauling its welfare programs, the most generous in the nation. Pete Wilson's commendable reform package would eliminate the welfare magnet problem by limiting benefits for new arrivals to the levels of their home state; it would discourage more welfare births by disallowing increased benefits for AFDC children; and it would attempt to discourage long-term dependency by reducing benefits by 15 per cent after six months.

All of these initiatives have their critics on both the Left and the Right. Predictably, the welfare lobby describes these changes as "punitive," "Malthusian," and "blaming the victims—children." Yet one can hardly imagine a system that serves children worse than the status quo. More serious are conservative complaints that the idea of rewarding welfare recipients for getting married, going to school, and so on is the essence of social engineering. Others ask whether these programs can hope to survive when CBS and CNN begin airing nightly documentaries of welfare mothers forced to panhandle on street corners. The Michigan reforms are already blamed for killing seven people.

But the preliminary results of Tommy Thompson's programs are promising. In 1990, welfare rolls rose by 9 per cent nationwide and 6 per cent in the Midwest, but *fell* by 2 per cent in Wisconsin.

**Education.** Wisconsin has also become the national test case for an education voucher program, pioneered by Democratic Assemblyman Polly Williams, that would send 550 low-income Milwaukee youths to private schools. Last month the State Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of the program, which gives Mrs. Williams and Governor Thompson the go-ahead to expand it. Legislation in more than a dozen other states would establish similar voucher programs there. California, for instance, may have an initiative—the Parental Choice in Education initiative—on the ballot in November to allow $2,600 education vouchers to all students. However, the teachers unions, the California School Board Association, and the local PTAs have launched a full-scale campaign of intimidation against this initiative. Their tactics include having teachers form human chains around signature-gathering booths, sending kids home from school crammed with anti-choice literature, and even using public-school funds to mail out anti-voucher propaganda. Despite these bully tactics the choice proponents have gathered nearly 800,000 signatures.



*"I spend, therefore I am."*

In a stunningly short time, school-choice advocates have won the intellectual debate. However, many states' laws allow choice only among public schools. There is a real danger that unless private-school options are included, these changes may only further delay true reform.

**Downsizing.** Liberals claim that the rich got richer in the 1980s. But no group prospered quite like state-government employees. Between 1980 and 1990 their rate of increase of pay and benefits grew an incredible four times faster than private-sector compensation. Meanwhile the workforces collecting these salaries mushroomed: while the U.S. population grew 9 per cent, state public employment grew 20 per cent.

Many states are finally bringing the gravy train to a halt. Nationwide, some 12,000 government workers have been terminated since late 1990 and more than 20,000 have been furloughed. In Pennsylvania, 1,800 employees have been axed, and several thousand more positions will be eliminated through early retirement. No one has cut the administrative blob with greater fervor than John Engler. State employment has been cut from 66,000 to 61,000 in Engler's first year alone—a 7.5 per cent reduction. Michigan, along with Massachusetts, will actually spend less money (in nominal dollars) this year than last.

**Privatization.** West Virginia recently raised $25 million by privatizing its state liquor stores; Colorado, thanks to legislation sponsored by State Senator Terry Considine, has cut transit-program costs by 25 per cent through contracting out the service; and Texas and New Mexico have private firms managing and operating their prisons.

The nation's most revolutionary privatization initiative is in traffic-congested California, where construction crews will soon break ground on four privately owned and financed 12- to 100-mile-long highway expansion projects. Drivers who use these private roads will pay tolls that will vary depending on the time of day and the level of congestion. The California Transportation Department reports that without the privatization option these roads would not have been built any time in this century, and maybe never. Arizona, Georgia, Florida, Min-



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nesota, and Virginia are considering similar private highway projects.

### *In the Labs*

LOUIS BRANDEIS called the states "laboratories of democracy," but, until recently, innovation in state government has been mostly regarded as synonymous with spending money. The most celebrated governors of the 1980s—Bruce Babbitt of Arizona, Mario Cuomo of New York, Tom Kean of New Jersey, and, of course, Michael Dukakis of Massachusetts—were big-government activists. Today none of these big-spending states seem so bold or innovative. They mostly seem bankrupt.

In the 1990s the genuine innovators—Thompson, Engler, Weld—are budget-cutting, free-market-oriented, supply-side populists. And their ideas are increasingly imitated even by the liberalest of governors, Jim Florio and Lowell Weicker. Reaganomics lives, more vibrantly than in the Reagan era itself. □

*Reinhold Niebuhr*

# FATHER OF NEOCONSERVATIVES

Nowadays, the truest disciples of the liberal theologian Reinhold Niebuhr are conservatives.

**MICHAEL NOVAK**

THIS is the one-hundredth year (*centesimus annus*) since the birth of Reinhold Niebuhr. There is no one on the Christian Left who fills his shoes today. Indeed, a significant number of Christians who have become disillusioned with the Left (as Niebuhr was with "liberals" in his time) call him their father. Others may regard them as illegitimate children (may perhaps state their view even more pungently). The fact is, neoconservatives cite Niebuhr at least as often as those on the Left do.

Why do so many conservatives, especially neoconservatives, regard Reinhold Niebuhr as their teacher? Consider these words of Will Herberg, written in 1956 about a time "in the later 1930s": "I was then at a most crucial moment in my life . . . left without any ground to stand on, deprived of the commitment and understanding that alone had made life livable." At this point, Herberg came upon *Moral Man and Immoral Society*. Herberg testified:

> . . . the "meeting" with Niebuhr's thought—I did not yet know him personally—quite literally changed my mind and life. Humanly speaking, it "converted" me, for in some manner I cannot describe, I felt my whole being, and not merely my thinking, shifted to a new center.

Not nearly so dramatic, but on a similar level, was my own first encounter with Niebuhr's work—in my case, *Beyond Tragedy*—in about 1956. I was at the time an undergraduate studying Thomistic philosophy. Niebuhr's book struck classical Aristotelian chords in me; his sense of contingency and irony rang true. Three years later I wrote one of the most favorable reviews a Niebuhr book ever received from a Catholic author.

Still, let us be clear about one thing. Reinhold Niebuhr always was and wanted to be a man of the Left. In the years of his vigor, indeed, it would have been hard to imagine what "an intellectual giant of the Republican Party" would even have looked like; the phrase would have sounded oxymoronic. So it must be one of the ironies of history, of a sort in which he took pleasure, that so many who read him not only became conservatives or neoconservatives but attributed their conversion in this direction to him. They had been Marxists or liberals or social democrats, until his criticisms of sentimental, idealistic, and rational liberalism liberated them. More than that, Niebuhr also taught them how to be conservatives in a new way—fresh, future-oriented, alert to factors of power and interest. It seemed to some of them that Niebuhr never followed the full logic of his own insights. Hear again Will Herberg:

> As far back as 1944, in *The Children of Light and the Children of Darkness*, signs of the essentially "conservative" cast of mind of this leading "liberal" could be discerned, for what is *The Children of Light* but a truly "conservative" defense of American democracy? . . . Nor should we be surprised to see his earlier "prophetic" radicalism culminate in the "new conservatism"; there is *an inner connection* between the two, and no real reversal is involved. For the "prophetic" radicalism implied a radical relativization of all political programs, institutions, and movements, and therefore a thoroughgoing rejection of *every* form of political rationalism. Add to this a renewed emphasis on the historic continuities of social life, and Niebuhr's brand of "conservatism" emerges. It is manifestly not the conservatism of those who are called conservatives in American public life [in 1956], but it is enough apparently to establish a kinship with Burke and give Niebuhr a prominent place in all recent histories and anthologies of the "new conservatism." [Italics added.]

Quite naturally, Niebuhrians of the Left want to keep Niebuhr pristinely "theirs." They are quite correct to do so, insofar as an historical account of Niebuhr's own public commitments demands it; consider, for example, his highly visible commitment to Americans for Democratic Action. Left-wing Niebuhrians, however, fail to dwell on two further considerations. First, many new conservatives of the 1950s, neoconservatives of a later generation, and assorted Aristotelians, Burkeans, Churchillians, Reaganites, and Thatcherites broke with the Left in some measure because of the *arguments* they learned from Niebuhr.

Second, they do not recognize the tremendous shift in the balance of cul-

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tural power since Niebuhr's death in 1971. Whereas in 1960 the media were for the most part on the Right, and even in the universities those on the Left felt themselves to be a *pusillus grex*, from at least the time of Richard Nixon both journalism and the universities have moved overwhelmingly to the moderate Left. In those circles today it takes little "prophetic" courage to stand with the Left, whereas opposing the Left does take stamina.

Ronald Preston, in an interesting essay "Reinhold Niebuhr and the New Right," takes it as a "fact that relative justice is likely to be with the radical Left because the Right has more power, as well as the force of inertia, on its side." But Preston fails to distinguish cultural power from political and economic power. In recent years the Left has been humbled in the political and economic spheres, but in the cultural sphere it is still the regnant power. This basic shift gives to the more conservative Niebuhrians the sweet elixir of practicing the "prophetic" role in the sphere of culture, against what David Halberstam in his book on the media called *The Powers That Be*.

Niebuhr himself, of course, was accustomed to doing battle with the Left. Like a theological Stonewall Jackson, he led many a punishing cavalry charge against sentimental and idealistic liberals, hard and soft utopians, Marxists, pacifists, and unthinking anti-Americans. In return, he took heavy fire from his left. Thus, it is easy to understand why left-wing Niebuhrians so dislike being attacked, *in Niebuhr's name*, from their *right*. Ronald Preston's way of getting round this is to call the views of the New Right "unnuanced," a criticism he borrows from John Bennett. One looks eagerly, therefore, to Preston for nuance.

Alas, many on the Right do lump together everyone to their left, without differentiation. And many on the Left manifest the same indifference regarding the Right. Thus, Professor Preston lists Russell Kirk as a "neoconservative," having no idea how much heartburn that will cause in Mecosta, Michigan. He demonstrates no instinct whatever for the many ways in which neoconservatives distinguish themselves both from conservatives and from libertarians. Nor does he even faintly suggest the enormous differences between the New Right in Britain (which is itself a movement of many important intellectual differences) and the cultural conservatives in the United States. Nuance indeed.

Moreover, considerably more nuance would be needed to use the word "capitalism" intelligently today. Under this heading, Preston lumps together Adam Smith, social Darwinism, "possessive individualism," libertarianism, and laissez-faire. With the confidence of a man who doesn't see how thin the ice is under his feet, Preston asserts that "the economic views of the new Right contain nothing new. They are the resurrection of notions which were current in the 1920s, and falsified following the years of the Wall Street

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*"King Frederick, meet King Alfred, benevolent despot. King Alfred, meet King Frederick, malevolent despot."*

crash of 1929. Since we know what Niebuhr said of them before, it is not hard to see what he would say of them now." One averts one's eyes in pity from this ignorance of massive changes in fact and theory that have affected the rebirth of capitalist conviction in this century.

To cite but one example, since about 1960 evidence has been pouring in for an important *empirical* proposition; *viz.*, that capitalism is a necessary but not sufficient condition for democracy. As a good empirical sociologist, Peter Berger has put in place all the necessary "nuances" of that proposition in *The Capitalist Revolution* (1987). The essential points had already been sketched in my *Spirit of Democratic Capitalism* (1982), and indeed by Niebuhr himself, who wrote, in *The Irony of American History* (1952):

> There are elements of truth in classical economies which remain a permanent treasure of a free society, since some forms of a "free market" are essential to democracy. The alternative is the regulation of economic process through bureaucratic political decisions. Such regulation, too consistently applied, involves the final peril of combining political and economic power.

In interpreting this sentence, Preston singles out the phrase "some forms of a 'free market,'" claiming that this phrase "hides all the problems at issue in the struggle to find in the area of social democracy and democratic socialism an economic order which is both efficient and humane." But in my mind an entirely different phrase lit up like neon: "the final peril of combining political and economic power." That phrase flashed a red warning light about the root danger inherent in social democracy and democratic socialism, and diagnosed the reason why neither is likely to lead to a society at once humane and efficient. On Niebuhr's own radical suspicion of unchecked power, the combination of political and economic power in the hands of a new administrative class could not but be inhumane. Social democracy by its very inner constitution is bound to empower the educated and highly organized middle class, at the expense of the disorganized poor. This is exactly what is happening in all social democracies today, as the more astute social democrats (especially in Britain) are beginning to concede.

Here again, Niebuhr—living in a different time, amid a different constellation of powers—did not follow the logic of his own insight. This is not surprising, since Niebuhr did not give much attention to economic issues. Precisely in Niebuhr's neglect, I found my own vocation. Surely, I thought, the next generation of Niebuhrians ought to push some of Niebuhr's deeper insights into the one major area he neglected. Moreover, since most of the Niebuhrians were, and are, tilted toward the Left, the Niebuhrian principle of countervailing intellectual power demanded that some of his students, at least, should push inquiry in other directions. It seemed to me further that the deepest insights of Niebuhr concerning social order demanded a threefold division of systems and powers.

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But Niebuhr's sustained criticism of economic liberalism shed light on the need to identify yet a third system, *viz.*, the moral and cultural system. This third factor becomes particularly clear in the maturing Niebuhr's dissatisfactions with both the liberalism and the conservatism of his time, as he set them forth in Chapter 5 of *Christian Realism and Political Problems*. Such discussions set me on the search for the three-sided system of countervailing powers that became the backbone of *The Spirit of Democratic Capitalism*. Indeed, one passage in Niebuhr's chapter defines the need for such a system quite clearly. It also helps to explain why former businessmen such as Secretary of State James Baker find themselves baffled by ethnicity, nationalism, Islamic fundamentalism, and other such moral and cultural realities:

> Unfortunately the businessman, as a man of affairs, fails us in the complexities of politics, because his experience is limited to a type of fairly simple collective endeavor in which the economic motive is isolated from other lusts and ambitions of men. . . . These facts dispose the commercial classes to that puzzling alternation between a pacifism, which obscures the factors of power [as in the 1930s, which Niebuhr never forgot], and an assertion of power, which is heedless of all the moral and cultural factors in an international situation.

Note that as Niebuhr here lampoons the blindness of businessmen to two of these systems, his students may on the same ground lampoon the blindness of political activists to the two other systems, and the blindness of clergymen, academics, and journalists, as well. "In God we trust" meant to Niebuhr: "In no one else."

From Niebuhr, in any case, neoconservatives in the United States have taken a great many lessons. Like him, most of us are Biblical in our vision of human nature and destiny. Most of us, as it happens, are Catholics and Jews, although not a few (and the numbers keep growing as people learn the "nuances") are Protestant, both mainline and evangelical. Like Niebuhr, we see "some forms of a 'free market'" as "a permanent treasure of the free society." Like Niebuhr, we reject social Darwinism, "possessive individualism," the abstraction "economic man," and the conceptual purity of libertarianism. We accept the need for the welfare state, although we have many criticisms of its current destructive practices, and many proposals for its reform. Like him, we are forward-looking, not backward-looking. We contest with the Left the direction in which true social progress lies.

Like Niebuhr, neoconservatives do not accept "the market" as a universal tool for every human need. For that matter, we do not accept "democracy," either, as a universal tool for every human need; like the American Framers, we are aware of the "diseases to which democracies have ever been prey." Like Niebuhr, we hold that both capitalism and the democratic republic depend on the primacy of certain claims of the Creator and Judge.

The necessity of the free market; the limited priority of politics over economics; and the primacy of the spirit—that is a fairly good summary of the neoconservative position, as outlined in Irving Kristol's *Reflections of a Neoconservative* (1984). Corrected for its inherent tendency to tilt toward the state, we think that social democracy is an acceptable variant of democratic capitalism. Otherwise, without this corrective, social democracy is quite dangerous, because of its class bias and its concentrations of power. In particular, we fear that social democracy rushes the world toward that "new soft despotism" which Tocqueville glimpsed as the terminus of egalitarian democracy. Nonetheless, in the name of countervailing powers, we welcome social democrats to the debate concerning which path to take in particular circumstances.

For the last decade or so, conservative Niebuhrians have read "the signs of the times" with considerably greater accuracy than their left-wing counterparts, though given our convictions about human nature we don't expect the latter to admit it. Nonetheless, the Left has done far better than the Right on one thing. Since about 1968, it has swung to its side most of the *literati*, professors of humanities and social science, higher clergy, editors and publishers, reporters, rock stars, and filmmakers—that is, most of the cultured despisers of conservatism in all its forms. Since these dominate the media, the seminaries, and the universities, left-wing Niebuhrians like to think that they control the mainstream. It is to the advantage of conservative Niebuhrians that they continue to believe this. □

## *J. Edgar Hoover's Obsession*

# INSIDE THE FBI

Attracting the Director's scrutiny were Communists, security risks, and people who made untoward jokes.

**NATALIE ROBINS**

J. EDGAR HOOVER'S treatment of right-wingers he didn't like was basically no different from his treatment of left-wingers he didn't like. He was just as skeptical, just as scornful, and just as vindictive toward Wm. F. Buckley Jr. as he was toward Murray Kempton.

Buckley's name first entered the FBI's indexes when he was just 16 years old, in a November 22, 1941, report concerning his father, "President of the Pantepec Oil Co. of Venezuela, a foreign corporation." However the 690-page file did not really begin to grow until 1949. In that year, Buckley, as chairman of the *Yale Daily News*, asked an FBI official to participate in a student debate about the Bureau, a request prompted by some anti-FBI articles that had appeared in the *Harvard Crimson*. Buckley told the special

*This piece is excerpted from the new book* Alien Ink *© 1992 by Natalie Robins, published by William Morrow. Natalie Robins is a poet and the co-author of the Edgar Award–winning* Savage Grace.



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agent in charge of the New Haven office that these articles "were journalistically poor" and "vicious." It was eventually decided at headquarters that the New Haven agent and Associate Director Louis Nichols would participate in the forum, although Hoover was not happy about this arrangement. In a very lengthy marginal note, he wrote: "I don't like this at all. As I understood originally they wanted us to meet informally and to outline our policies and problems and answer questions for honest enlightenment. Now it has degenerated into a public assembly as a debate. . . . I will approve Nick going but I will do so reluctantly."

The forum was a great success, however, and Nichols later wrote Buckley how pleased he was with "his kind references to the Director," concluding, "I hope that we will never let you down."

Buckley comments: "That's interesting that Hoover was never really in favor of Nichols coming up to Yale, because I got a letter from him after the debate was over which is just oleaginous. . . . He was unbelievably pleased, and then he invited me to come down and see him next time I was in Washington.

"When I mentioned to Lou Nichols that I was not going to graduate school, he said, 'Well, why don't you come in to the FBI?' And I stalled . . . because I was deep cover at the time with the CIA. . . .

"Nichols told me that they would be willing to waive the obligation of agents being lawyers if I were immediately to join the Bureau, and I said, 'Gee thanks, but I've got other things on my mind.' I think I said that I was terribly mixed up with the aftermath of *God and Man at Yale* and was trying to write another book. . . . [I] had a tour of the Bureau when I was receiving my CIA secret training."

On October 26, 1950, the FBI reported on the special tour of headquarters given the day before to Buckley and his wife, who met with the Director "within a matter of minutes after their arrival at the Bureau." The report even includes a comment Mrs. Buckley made afterward: "I just can't get over it and he is so busy," and details how both Buckleys fired Thompson machine guns. Mrs. Buck-

## *File It: Vindicated*

WHEN he was still firmly in control, East German Chairman Erich Honecker wanted to travel to the U.S. to bolster his position internationally. In anticipation, he had his spies gather a dossier on Ronald Reagan.

The resulting file includes a history of the actor turned President, who, it said, from his early days was "a dyed-in-the-wool anti-Communist . . . [engaged] in a campaign to drive progressive persons out of the film industry and the unions." It adds that, as a presidential candidate, Mr. Reagan promised to regain "the international leadership position which the U.S. had forfeited" under Jimmy Carter.

A compilation of mostly KGB and *Stasi* intelligence reports, the file reveals the very low opinion the Soviets & Co. held of President Jimmy Carter. They note that he mismanaged the economy, reduced the morale of American business, and weakened the U.S. position worldwide: "Carter was not able to secure a firm leadership of the country at a difficult period"; he "brought [U.S.–Soviet] relations to their lowest point." Several reports implied that Reagan, if elected, would reverse this trend. One includes a quote from a speech he delivered during his 1980 campaign: "No one wants to use atomic weapons, but the enemy should go to sleep every night in fear that we could use them."

Much of the information is pulled straight from the American press. But some of it, notes Jack Koehler, who came across the file while researching a book on the *Stasi*, could only have come from sources inside the White House or from classified documents. For instance, a top-secret 1987 KGB report reveals that Reagan hoped to unify the reaction of Western nations to the announced Soviet plan to withdraw intermediate-range weapons from Europe. The report anticipated that the Administration would announce its response in early June. A handwritten note in the margin says such intentions were not revealed until June 22.

Rarely do the agents break from their dispassionate reporting and editorialize. But one KGB profile emphasizes the President's repeated attacks on the Communist bloc's lack of political freedom, prohibition of free speech, tight internal security, restrictions on worship and travel, and economic failures. The report's author grumbles that the President omits such positive attributes as efforts at world peace and disarmament; the "fulfillment of the Helsinki final acts, for example, [by] reuniting families, are ignored."

A 1980 KGB profile of Reagan accurately notes that the candidate likes to delegate much to his deputies; that he doesn't drink or smoke; that he's uncompromising; that his wife, Nancy, has a great deal of influence over him. If released earlier it could even have scooped some of the tabloids: one East German analyst wrote in 1980 that the Reagans regularly read their horoscope. It was also reported that communication director Pat Buchanan was leaving in order "to consolidate the conservative movement."

Well, Mr. Honecker never came to the United States. Instead the Gipper went to Berlin and demanded, "Mr. Gorbachev, tear down this wall." If Mr. Honecker had been able to conceive of a fundamental change in the political order, he could have seen a foreshadowing of 1989 in this file. For the *Stasi* itself wrote in 1980 that Mr. Reagan is "a firm and unbending politician for whom words and deeds are one and the same."

The file was compiled in the heat of the cold war when the Communist bloc still believed it could put the U.S. in the dustbin of history. Perhaps in a way the dream came true, for the file was discovered last year in a dumpster behind *Stasi* headquarters after they had been ransacked by angry Berliners. It now rests prominently in the Reagan library as testimony to the former President's efforts and a vindication of his cause. —GEOFFREY MORRIS

*Mr. Morris is* NR*'s Executive Editor.*



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ley, however, says, "I have never fired a machine gun in my life."

There were several minor entries in the Buckley file over the next five years; then, in 1955, the FBI reported that Buckley had recently launched NATIONAL REVIEW, and on November 23, a Bureau official wrote a memo saying, "I think the Director would be interested in looking at it . . . It is believed that this journal and the writers connected with it may be of some value to the Bureau."

In 1957, Buckley sent Louis Nichols a copy of the press release announcing that Whittaker Chambers had joined the staff of NATIONAL REVIEW; it was accompanied by a note: "I wanted you to know ahead of the gang."

Over the years, Buckley continued to send Nichols releases, articles, and other items of interest; all of these were warmly acknowledged, either by Nichols or by the Director himself. "Buckley is the outspoken anti-Communist" was the identifying wording always typed next to copies of anything received from Buckley, a description implying that the Bureau approved of him, and he always approved of it. He continued "a very close association" with Nichols.

Buckley explains: "A man named Gaty, a bachelor—a Wichita man—left . . . a million and a half dollars to sort of right-wing-type things. He named ten trustees, and J. Edgar Hoover was one of them. But Hoover said, no, he couldn't serve—because he wouldn't serve on anything—so I then nominated Nichols, saying, obviously, the guy who left the money wanted someone representing the FBI. So as a result, we had one meeting a year—the bylaws specified that if you attended the annual meeting you had the absolute right to assign $10,000 to your favorite charity, so everybody was always there. Nichols was elected and so we went to ten meetings together—the idea was to exhaust the corpus within ten years. So I saw a lot of him during that period. Nice guy. Not a very secure sense of humor."

## *The Unforgivable Sin*

BUT IN 1967 Buckley committed the unforgivable sin: he ridiculed Hoover. The May 30, 1967, issue of NATIONAL REVIEW parodied the *New York Times*, and on the mock front page was an article saying that J. Edgar Hoover had submitted his resignation as director upon his arrest on a morals charge. On May 25, 1967, Buckley was removed from the Special Correspondents' list because he "attempted to be humorous at the expense of the Director." Hoover called the article "a new low in journalism," and never forgave him. From that time on, every reference to Buckley mentioned the parody.

But Buckley never noticed that he had been taken off the list, because, he says, "I didn't know I was *on* the list."

According to the file, Hoover had been so angry that he had Cartha DeLoach, the number three man in the FBI, call Buckley at home after the parody appeared. When DeLoach was told that Buckley was "very ill" with the flu and not able to take calls, he insisted that the matter was urgent and that Buckley must call him back, which he did. DeLoach lectured Buckley that "there would be many people who would accept the article at face value" and "the entire FBI was outraged." Buckley told DeLoach he had heard no complaints from anyone about what was clearly satire.

Hoover even pursued the possibility of taking legal action. He was advised against it. Three years later, in 1970, when he was invited to be a guest on *Firing Line*, he declined, pleading a scheduling conflict, but a note he wrote in the margin of the invitation letter says: "No. Buckley recently wrote a vicious column on the FBI."

"I'll be damned," says a surprised Buckley, who never knew of Hoover's anger until he read it in his file.

In February 1968, the FBI wrote a memo expressing disapproval of a remark made on *Firing Line* by Leo Cherne, then the director of the Research Institute of America. According to a memo, Buckley "indicated he would delete" the offending remark, in which Cherne said that he had opposed Senator Joseph McCarthy in 1946 because McCarthy "was supported by Communists."

The memo then reported that "no reference to this incident was contained in the show as broadcast in Washington." However, Buckley says that "the only time in the history of *Firing Line* that something was deleted was a libel by Roy Cohn—who was on the show with Cherne. Roy had once called someone a Communist and my ear twitched—because I had a pretty good memory on the question, and he had gotten the wrong guy. So we pulled it out as a matter of slander. And then, one other time we pulled out something that Howard Hunt said. I remember no third time we pulled anything out."

During the summer of 1969, Buckley invited Hoover to join him and seven others—Jack Benny, Leonard Bernstein, Robert Graves, Paul McCartney, Roddy McDowall, Archibald MacLeish, and Mickey Rooney—in a libel suit against the Olympia Press for listing their names in *The Homosexual Handbook*, which the publishers called "a hearsay reference work." Although Hoover agreed there was a case, he declined to be part of it, partly because of the publicity that would ensue, partly because the records could not be sealed, and partly because "Buckley indicates no financial target that would make the lawsuit profitable in the money sense." Interestingly, Hoover does not mention any financial concern in the letter he eventually wrote Buckley.

In the fall of 1969, a prank letter Buckley wrote to *Life* magazine somehow made its way into his FBI file. The letter is written "in behalf of Roy Cohn" who is offering "to lend *Life* money at modest rates of interest provided *Life* will consent to move its editorial offices from Delaware to Illinois." Buckley explains that "what happened was that somebody wrote a feature story on Roy Cohn, and I occupied one paragraph of it, and in that paragraph it said I had borrowed money from Roy Cohn's Illinois-based bank to buy my schooner, which is absolutely correct. They then went on to say Buckley's boat is registered in Illinois—which it had to be, because of the bank loan—'even though he cruises in Connecticut.' So my letter to *Life* was a tease. *Life* is situated in New York, but is based corporately in Delaware. It's an odd thing to be in my FBI file. But I obviously sent Roy a copy and he probably sent it to an FBI buddy to amuse him—because he was very tight with all these guys."

Two years after the parody that provoked Hoover's wrath, the FBI used Buckley as part of a "Black Nationalist-Hate groups" Cointelpro (Counterintelligence Program) operation. This is the first known instance of a prominent person on the Right being used this way.



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During the fall of 1969, the FBI wrote Buckley an anonymous letter "setting forth Yale University sanctions of Black Panther Party activities on the Yale campus during May 1969." The FBI's goal was to stir Buckley up so he would write something negative about the Panthers, or about the recent arrest of Bobby Seale for murder and kidnapping.

"The idea was to inflame me?" Buckley asks, adding, "I had a pretty low opinion of Bobby Seale anyway." His office usually keeps anonymous letters, but it could not locate the one the FBI supposedly sent regarding the Panthers. Yale University, which houses Buckley's letters and papers, also conducted an unsuccessful search. Either it was composed but never actually sent, or else it disappeared. In any case, Buckley did write a column on November 13, 1969, about Bobby Seale's trial, saying among many things that "Seale is engaged in traditional revolutionary strategy," and that he is trying "to distract attention" from his murder and kidnapping charges. "I do believe Seale was guilty," Buckley comments, "and he *did* adopt those strategies."

Buckley, who knew nothing about the Cointelpro scheme, or about being on Hoover's "enemies" list, carried on as usual with the FBI. In June of 1970, he "confidentially" forwarded a letter he had received to Cartha DeLoach; its contents involved a student bomb factory in Maryland. The letter writer described in graphic detail what he had seen and asked Buckley not to contact the police; the FBI managed to contact the letter writer without implicating Buckley.

In 1971, another NATIONAL REVIEW parody was misunderstood by the Bureau. This one, called "The Secret Papers They Didn't Publish," purported to be some missing pages from the Pentagon Papers. The FBI seriously analyzed the article in a seven-page memo, calling it "disjointed and lacking in continuity," and nowhere indicated that they recognized it as the put-on it was.

Buckley recalls that the *Washington Post* also did not know it was a put-on. He adds that it is "extraordinary" that the FBI report took it so seriously, although he admits it was "ingeniously done, and we got from James Burnham Jr., who had been in Naval Intelligence, the actual series of secret code numbers used by the Navy—so the FBI must have been astonished, if they had checked those out. I can't believe it! I simply can't believe they didn't know it was a hoax. Among other things, one of them might have called me up, right?"

In 1974, *Firing Line* asked Director Clarence Kelley to be a guest, and although this time the memo stated that "over the years the Bureau has had a cordial relationship with Buckley," nonetheless, the 1967 parody—or, as Buckley calls it, "the event"—was mentioned once again. In addition, other reasons were given for Kelley's not appearing: that the show was seen on non-prime time and, surprisingly, that it was too much a "sounding board" for conservatism, and the Director should not be "affiliated as a partisan."

Buckley's final reference is a letter Director Kelley wrote him thanking him for a recent pro-FBI column.

## *Is It Shocking?*

BUCKLEY comments: "I've always thought that the essential distinction is widely ignored . . . namely, that the FBI is a data-collecting agency, and it's on the basis of the data collection that they get *clues*. For instance, on fingerprints. In the Lindbergh kidnapping, if they hadn't collected fingerprints for years, they wouldn't have found Hauptmann. . . . So there's nothing in my file that *shocks* me. . . .

"I assumed my file would be pretty copious because every third person I ran into in 1969 and 1973 said they had been asked about me . . . I didn't know about the Hoover rebuff at all. I don't know what service Hoover suspended because I don't remember receiving FBI service. It must have been disappointing to him that I didn't know I was in Coventry. . . .

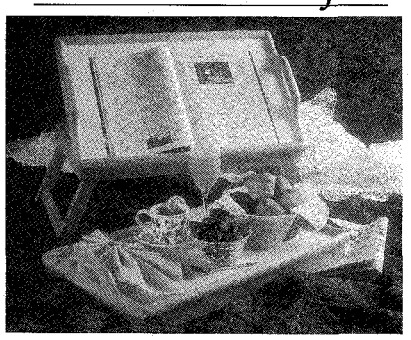
"As for the 1969 Cointelpro, was Hoover otherwise only using left-wingers? That's fascinating, if I'm the only right-winger whom he victimized like this. So he was just playing games with me! Oh well, I'm not entirely opposed to what would be the equivalent of a CIA-type activity intended to confuse communications among a crystallizing front—people whose intentions were clearly subversive. If you find out they cause riots in Watts or Philadelphia or Washington by intending to burn down a house, and then disrupt schooling, et cetera, then they become enemies of the state. Now, what is licensable activity in situations like that is a fine line and not easy to draw. If an effort was made to confuse, then, and there was prima facie evidence that the people being watched were bent on disruption and maybe even violence, then it is something that wouldn't shock me.

"The idea of being *personally* victimized is simply an aspect of Hoover's lack of any sense of proportion. My satire, in 1967, was something he should have applauded—even though he was entirely an incidental figure. I was astonished that he should have reacted as he did. . . .

"So, people who don't have a sense of humor should not be in charge of national security—their perspectives are dim, they are not reliable. Hoover was obviously a person without any sense of humor—without any sense of perspective.

"The FBI hasn't interfered in my life, so far as I know. The only thing that Hoover did that I find impossible to rationalize is that business involving Bobby Seale." □


**Book & Breakfast**



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# Cleopatra's Nose

JOHN GRAY

IN HIS brilliant, ingenious, but nevertheless deeply unhistorical and ultimately absurd book, Francis Fukuyama argues that History—understood, in Hegelian–Marxist terms, to mean ideology—is over. With the collapse of Communism, there remains no legitimate alternative to liberal democracy, which is therefore the final form of human government. Wars and revolutions, tyrannies and dictatorships, may yet come and go, so that history understood as the events historians study will doubtless drag on; but History as the contestation over economic and political systems has come to an end. Only liberal democracy can satisfy the universal human need for self-recognition, or *thymos*—the Platonic virtue of spiritedness. Fukuyama acknowledges fundamentalism and nationalism to be powerful forces currently at large in the world; but he interprets them as reactive phenomena, responses to oppression or to over-rapid modernization, with little power of their own. We need not fear another century of global wars, as we creep nervously into the new millennium. We have more to fear, according to Fukuyama—following Nietzsche and perhaps Weber—from the boredom that flows from the rationalization of the world. It is Nietzsche's Last Men, not his blond beasts, that herald the mild and gentle Apocalypse to come.

***The End of History and the Last Man, by Francis Fukuyama (Free Press, 418 pp., $24.95)***

Fukuyama is right that we are seeing the end of ideology—that is to say, of those secular religions, or political faiths, that we inherited from the Enlightenment and from its nineteenth-century followers, such as Marx. He does not notice, however, that the end of ideology encompasses the euthanasia of liberalism—that tottering political faith his book is devoted to propping up. The post-Soviet peoples have not shaken off one nineteenth-century ideology, Marxism, to adopt another, liberalism; none of them ever accepted the former, and few the latter. They have instead returned to their immemorial ethnic and cultural identities, national and religious, with all the ancient enmities they carry with them. The post-Communist peoples do not express their *thymos* by wishing to become producers and consumers in a global market, or rights-bearers in a universal liberal democracy; they express it by the demand for nationhood, as Armenians or Georgians, Lithuanians or Russians, and by the reassertion (as in the former Soviet Central Asia) of their traditional religious identities. For the post-Communist peoples, history has not ended. Instead, after decades of interruption, it has been resumed.

Our author—referred to in Japan, pointedly, as "the American writer Fukuyama"—is able to pass over these evident facts because, despite himself, he is propounding a secular theodicy, a directional and teleological interpretation of history—in which history's *telos* is, of course, *us*. The notion that human history has a goal or *telos*, and the related notion that it is possible to write a Universal History of Mankind, makes sense, if at all, only when based on religious suppositions, such as the Christian idea of Providence that animates Edmund Burke's whiggish interpretation of history. Yet religion is wholly absent from Fukuyama's thought, except as an inconvenient (and ephemeral) impediment to the global tranquilization he thinks is our fate. (The banal and insipid quality of the godlessness that pervades Fukuyama's book is in stark contrast with the atheism of one of his mentors, Nietzsche, which is—rightly—suffused with anguish and despair.) Fukuyama tells us that "liberalism vanquished religion in Europe"—a statement that will come as a surprise to the ordinary denizen of Belfast, but may be unsurprising coming from one who, in his lectures in Britain, referred to the English Civil War as a conflict between Protestants and Catholics. The idea that religious faith has been domesticated and privatized, and thereby nullified as a force in political life, may well have some plausibility in England today; but it is not true of contemporary Germany, say, and it is ludicrously false in respect of the United States, whose public and political life is pervaded by religious ideas and values.

The Mechanism (his term) that Fukuyama invokes to sustain the directionality of history is, in fact, a compound of two ideas: Hegel's morality tale of the dialectic of Master and Slave, as interpreted by Fukuyama's other mentor, and interpreter of Hegel, Alexandre Kojève; and what Fukuyama himself describes as "a kind of Marxist interpretation of history that leads to a completely non-Marxist conclusion"—namely, an economic interpretation of history that explains the growth of human productive powers by the development of scientific knowledge and its exploitation by human beings to satisfy their desires.

The trouble with this Mechanism of Fukuyama's is the trouble with Marxism—it is monocausal and overly deterministic. It is true that the Communist regimes fell partly because of the ruinous poverty they presided over, but it is also true, as the author himself admits, that they fell because their subject peoples perceived them as illegitimate, and their rulers had lost the will to rule by terror. The same point may be put in more general and more philosophical terms. While it is true that human history exhibits tendencies and perhaps even cycles, these are always subject to contingency, to the forces of chance and accident. (Would the Bolshevik regime have survived if the bullet fired at

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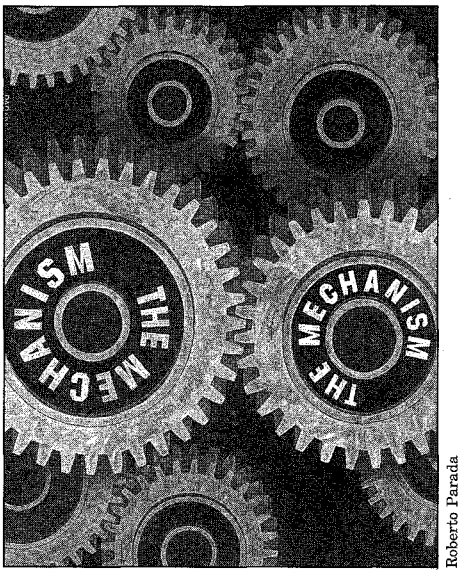
Lenin by his would-be assassin, Fanny Kaplan, had in fact killed him?) Cleopatra's nose is a better guide to history than Fukuyama's Mechanism.

Whatever slight plausibility the Mechanism might possess derives entirely from the truly fantastic abstractness of Fukuyama's account of recent history. Accordingly, in a table plainly designed to overwhelm the reader with a sense of the virtually irresistible charm of liberal democracy, we learn that among the 61 liberal democracies that existed in 1990 are Rumania and Japan, Bulgaria and Great Britain, Sri Lanka and Papua New Guinea—all listed as examples of a single form of government. It is hardly necessary to comment on the Monty Pythonish character of this categorization. Rumania certainly, and Bulgaria probably, remain ruled by manipulative Bolshevik cliques; Britain retains (so far) an adversarial parliamentary system, but Japan has single-party rule, and the most significant decisions are not taken in the political realm at all; and so on. Again, our author tells us that "Contemporary liberal democracies did not emerge out of the shadowy mists of tradition. Like Communist societies they were deliberately created by human beings at a definite point in time." But the world's genuine liberal democracies have very different histories: democracy in England *did* "emerge out of the shadowy mists of tradition," as it did in the Low Countries and perhaps also in Scandinavia. As at many other points, Fukuyama here implicitly deploys the United States as a paradigm, when it is in truth a limiting case.

It would be easy, but mistaken, to write of Fukuyama's treatise as an exercise in a genre as charmingly dated as heraldry or metaphysical history, and as practically irrelevant. This would be a grave error, since Fukuyama's Panglossian (or Pollyannaish) vision has undoubted appeal to some sectors of conservative opinion, and it has real and dangerous implications for policy. Consider his account of universal convergence on democratic capitalism. This implies that the "systems debate"—the debate about which economic and political institutions are best for modern industrial societies—is over, when in fact one such debate has merely replaced another. The model of the socialist command economy has indeed been removed from the political and intellectual agenda, and a consensus reached on the indispensability of market institutions as vehicles for the self-reproduction of modern societies. The debate now is over *which variety* of market institution is to be adopted in the post-Communist states and in the developing world. Is the model of market institutions that of Anglo-American democratic capitalism, or is it that of German neo-corporatism, or East Asian *dirigisme* under authoritarian political auspices? If present trends are any guide, the new systemic debate is going against the model of democratic capitalism, with China opting for authoritarian development on the Japanese and South Korean models, and Russia oscillating uncer-



Roberto Parada

tainly between a more or less Chilean model of capitalist development and the East Asian example. The Olympian abstraction of Fukuyama's account obscures this important debate.

Or consider the implications of Fukuyama's tranquilly apocalyptic vision for strategic and security policy. If fundamentalism is transitional and transitory and has no long-range political importance; if nationalism is fated to become a matter of private cultural preference, like tastes in ethnic cuisine; if we can expect a universal convergence on liberal democratic institutions, and these are inherently non-aggressive—if these premises are all granted, what need will the Western powers then have for national defense? If we are entering a world whose chief evil is boredom, it would seem not at all unreasonable to cut defense expenditure to the bone—as is, in fact, currently the trend, especially in the United States. All this assumes that the world after the unraveling of the postwar settlement will be a peaceful world, and it panders to the hopes and illusions of democracies, such as the United States, that lack strong martial traditions. Worse, Fukuyama's argument supports the groundless claim that modern states are by nature post-military societies in which national defense is unnecessary or optional. It is hard to think of a more perilous or debilitating idea.

A far truer, and much darker, picture of our likely future is given in the recent book *Le nouveau monde de l'ordre de Yalta au chaos des nations* (Paris: Gasset, 1992), by Pierre Lellouche, foreign-policy advisor to Jacques Chirac, leader of the Gaullist opposition in France. For Lellouche, the undoing of the postwar settlement inaugurates a desperately dangerous period for the world—a period in which the United States retreats as a global power and exhibits ever more of the traits of the Latin American states, in which the mirage of a federal superstate in Europe is dissipated by the re-emergence of immemorial national rivalries, and in which most of the post-Communist countries, including Russia, turn to forms of dictatorship and authoritarianism.

If this is so, the coming century looks to be, not the end of history, but a tragic epoch in which history is resumed along traditional lines, but on a far vaster scale—an epoch of Malthusian wars and religious and ethnic convulsions, of ecological catastrophes, forced migrations, and mass deaths overshadowing those of our century. It will be an epoch in which the uncontrolled proliferation of technologies of mass destruction shifts the balance of advantage of nuclear deterrence from the North to the anarchic South and in which (because of their economic success, and because neither of them is emulating the unilateral military self-emasculation of the Western powers) Japan and China are set to overturn the Occidental supremacy of the past few centuries. It is hard to avoid the suspicion that, with these great geopolitical changes afoot, and with the United States seemingly bent on repeating on a grander scale the historical experience of Argentina, but in a context in which the crumbling Leviathan of the Federal Government presides over a Hobbesian anarchy of



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warring ethnicities, Fukuyama's book will have to endure the mockery of fate, as we shuffle, exhausted and blinking, back onto the classical terrain, harsh but familiar, of history and human tragedy. □

# A Branch of Jesse

MARTIN SIEFF

HE was a flawed titan, and after decades of achievement his people chose to remember only the flaws. Starting his career as a modern-day Joshua, acclaimed for vanquishing Israel's enemies on every side, he finished it like Jeremiah, rejected and hated for urging a policy —autonomy for the Palestinians—his people abhorred.

The life of Moshe Dayan, third chief of staff of the Israel Defense Forces, is an extraordinary tale. A renaissance man, capable of astonishing kindness, understanding, and generous sensitivity toward others, including his enemies in battle, he was loathed by his own children. The greatest Jewish military leader since King David, whom he much resembled, he was widely distrusted among his colleagues for preferring the company of Bedouins and Palestinians to theirs. Golda Meir scathingly dubbed him "the Arab."

***Warrior Statesman: The Life of Moshe Dayan, by Robert Slater (St. Martin's, 444 pp., $27.95)***

Like King David, Dayan rose to be the savior of his country while still in his thirties. Like David, he was a magnificent writer, possessed of a profound gallantry toward friends and foes. Like David, he developed from heroic young warrior to shrewd, cynical statesman running an empire for profit.

Like David, he was adored by his soldiers, and, like the great Biblical king, he liked the ladies and risked scandal repeatedly in his many affairs. Also like David, he was cursed in his old age by the hatred of his own children. Perhaps the most shocking scene in the book is his son Ari's farewell rant of rage, screaming abuse at his helpless father as he lies dying—truly, a modern Absalom.

Robert Slater, longtime Jerusalem bureau chief for *Time*, has taken on the daunting task of biographer to this formidable, protean genius. His work, the first major study in English since Dayan's death in 1981, is a worthy, solid introduction.

Dayan's life was lived on a mythic scale and at operatic intensity. The first baby born in 1915 on the first kibbutz ever established in Israel, he faced mortal danger even before he was born. His parents were subjected to strong pressure from their fellow pioneers to abort him: conditions in Turkish-occupied Palestine during World War I were so bad that they could not feed another mouth. Showing the same truculent independence that would characterize his first-born son, Shmuel Dayan refused.

It almost seems as if he was weaned to be a warrior defending his embattled people. In his teens, in the 1930s, he was a pioneer soldier who fought with the British to crush a Palestinian Arab rebellion and then was thrown in jail for his efforts. The British released him to fight for them again in 1941, and he lost an eye battling the Vichy French in Syria.

It was David Ben-Gurion, the fierce, visionary old founding father of Israel, who raised him up to run the Israeli army after what had to then been an impressive but not outstanding career. And it was during his four years as chief of staff, from 1953 to 1957, that he laid the enduring institutional foundations for what became one of the legendary fighting forces of history, the modern Israeli army.

Dayan's efforts climaxed in 1956 when, in three days, he swept the vastly larger and better equipped Egyptian army from the Sinai peninsula, killing 3,000 troops and capturing another 7,000 for only 180 Israeli soldiers dead. He left the army the following year and served as an abrasive, but able, agriculture minister under Ben-Gurion—before following his mentor into the political wilderness in a Labor Party split.

Loathed by the "Old Guard" of Israeli socialist leaders, Dayan nevertheless was swept back to office on June 1, 1967. Within four days, he had launched his legions on the Six-Day War, the most astonishing military victory of modern times. But Dayan was belittled by Israeli critics almost as soon as the war ended. He had had no part in its planning, they argued, and had stolen the credit for its success.

After the war, Dayan enjoyed a "golden age" when he was above criticism, even though he defied government regulations and took archaeological artifacts for his own private collection, and incredibly led a promiscuous lifestyle. Jealous colleagues begrudged him his Teflon reputation. But there was to be a reckoning.

On October 6, 1973—Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement—Egyptian and Syrian armies caught Israel by surprise, north and south; neither Dayan nor his generals had an inkling of what was coming. Israel trembled on the brink of extinction, and won only at the cost of 3,000 dead, a proportionately greater toll than all U.S. dead in World War II, and suffered in three weeks. Dayan appeared to panic under the pressure. When victory came, it was thanks to the brilliance of other generals—Ariel Sharon, Rafael Eitan, and Avigdor Ben-Gal.

As Dayan had risen on the winds of Israeli popular opinion in 1967, so he fell in the whirlwind of popular rage that followed the war six years later. Public fury over the "*mehdel*," or "foul-up," swept him and his colleagues out of power. The enormities of which he was accused and the intensity of hatred hurled at him dwarfed Richard Nixon's Watergate experience. Yet within four years, Dayan was back in office again. He had abandoned Labor, the party he had served for thirty years, and joined Menachem Begin's first Likud government as foreign minister in 1977.

Dayan was reviled anew for his move, but his contributions over the next two years were real and enduring. He brokered a lasting peace with Egypt and worked out an autonomy plan for the Palestinians in the occupied territories that, 12 years later, still looks like the only realistic chance for an Israeli–Palestinian compromise.

But Begin loathed Palestinian au-

*Mr. Sieff is a foreign editor at the* Washington Times.



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tonomy, and Dayan, ailing and sidetracked as foreign minister, resigned in 1979. Hardly a leaf trembled at his going. The Israeli public was sick and tired of him. When he died after an excruciating bout with cancer two years later, the press coverage was lukewarm and casual.

It should not have ended that way. The great army that triumphed in 1973 against all odds was his creation more than any other man's. He had taught the fearful survivors of the Holocaust to take miraculous victory for granted, and then they turned on him when he fell victim to that illusion too. His flaws and failings were real. But the contempt into which he fell revealed uglier failings among his fellow countrymen, hypocrisy and ingratitude, judgmentalism and forgetfulness. Jewish legend says that Joshua was similarly reviled and forgotten before his death.

Mr. Slater tells this remarkable story extremely well. Like many seasoned journalists, he disdains, or is embarrassed by, rhetorical flourishes or sweeping judgments. His style is inconspicuous and low-key. But so riveting is his tale that the story tells itself. In a welcome contrast to the so-called "new generation" of revisionist Israeli historians, he does not second-guess the past.

Later biographers of Dayan's amazing career can—and should—ponder deeply the ironies of his achievements. But all will have to refer to Mr. Slater's fine book. □

# Disunited We Stand

RICHARD BROOKHISER

WHEN Arthur Schlesinger Jr.'s long essay on the evils of multiculturalism first appeared last year, it caused a sensation, even though, since it was a Whittle Book, hardly anyone read it. Here, the news stories implied, was the Last Liberal, sounding like an editorial from NATIONAL REVIEW, circa 1957. Now that Norton has rescued *The Disuniting of America* from limbo, it is possible to read what he has actually said, and not said.

The negative half of Schlesinger's thesis is blunt and spirited. Once upon a time, immigrants and other minority groups "*expected* to become Americans. Their goals were escape, deliverance, assimilation. They saw America as a transforming nation, banishing dismal memories. . . . The point of America was not to preserve old cultures, but to form a new *American* culture." This, Schlesinger argues, is still the goal of most up-and-coming Americans: when asked what historical figures they most admired, the readers of *Vista*, an

***The Disuniting of America, by Arthur M. Schlesinger Jr. (Norton, 160 pp., $14.95)***

*The paperback edition of Mr. Brookhiser's* The Way of the WASP *(Free Press) is due out in May.*


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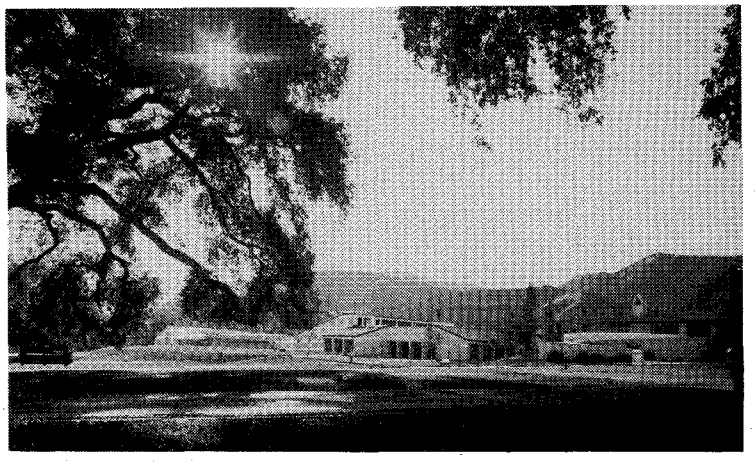

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English-language magazine for Hispanics, picked Washington, Lincoln, and Theodore Roosevelt. But ethnic activists and advocates increasingly push "a new ethnic gospel," whose "underlying philosophy" holds "that America is . . . a nation of groups, that ethnicity is the defining experience for most Americans, that ethnic ties are permanent and indelible. . . . It belittles *unum* and glorifies *pluribus*."

The apostles of ethnicity try to propagate their gospel in the schools, and Schlesinger is at his sharpest when he assails them. The process begins with "scholars" who claim that the Constitution was cribbed from the Iroquois, or that ancient Egypt was a black civilization whose wisdom was plundered by Alexander the Great and slipped to his tutor Aristotle. School administrators, often guilty whites, insert such stuff in their curriculums in the interest of raising the self-esteem of minority students—what Schlesinger calls "history . . . as social and psychological therapy." Schlesinger questions whether it raises anybody's self-esteem much; Ralph Ellison, he notes, attributed his own sense of expanded human possibility not to his kinship with Cleopatra, or even Richard Wright, but to youthful encounters with Freud, Marx, and Ezra Pound. Certainly nobody learns anything from the ethnocentrists that is useful in the real world. "If some Kleagle of the Ku Klux Klan wanted to devise an educational curriculum for the specific purpose of handicapping and disabling black Americans," writes Schlesinger, swinging for the sound-bite bleachers, "he would not be likely to come up with anything more disabling than Afrocentrism."

But when it comes time to offer an alternative, Schlesinger whiffs. What is the American culture he wants to preserve? Early on, he quotes *Vista*'s favorite historical figure: "The bosom of America," wrote Washington, "is open . . . to the oppressed and persecuted of all Nations and Religions" so long as they follow "our customs, measures, and laws." What are they? "The white Anglo-Saxon Protestant tradition," Schlesinger writes, "was for two centuries . . . the dominant influence on American culture and society." What was it?

The best Schlesinger can offer by way of definition is the mush of process. America is America to the extent

Alice Mooney

that it approximates an Upper West Side Democratic club. The "American Creed . . . is an ever-evolving philosophy, fulfilling its ideals through debate, self-criticism, protest, disrespect . . ." At one point, Schlesinger trots out a little historicism—we're here because we're here because we're here. "People with a different history will have differing values. But we believe that our own are better for us. They work for us"—at which point, all I could think of was an old *New Yorker* cartoon of a devil telling a batch of grimacing damned that the main rule of Hell was doing "what works best for *you*."

A less evasive description of the American character and the WASP tradition might define it by its attitude to three things: self-enrichment, self-rule, and the nature of the universe.

Modern liberals are uncomfortable with self-enrichment, though it has been this country's main magnet of attraction for centuries. One of the keenest accounts of its power was written by Henry Adams, of all people, in the first volume of his *History of the United States*. After describing what we so often forget, the sheer harshness of America in 1800, Adams added: "[Yet] the poor came, and from them were seldom heard complaints of deception or delusion. Within a moment, by the mere contact of a moral atmosphere, they saw . . . the glowing continent." Natural resources did not create American wealth. The determination of Americans to be well-off found the natural resources. That determination inspired several American character traits: a high regard for things that were useful, a low regard for things that were merely sensual (from art to vices, especially pleasant ones), all the early-to-bed-early-to-rise maxims of Benjamin Franklin.

Schlesinger has a better feel for American self-rule, and he quotes Tocqueville to good effect. "How does it happen that in the United States, where the inhabitants have recently immigrated . . . that every one takes a zealous interest in the affairs of his township, his country, and the whole state as if they were his own? It is because everyone, in his sphere, takes an active part in the government of society."

But Americans believed in self-rule not just because the practice of it kept them active and alert, like calisthenics at a Japanese auto plant. They insisted on ruling themselves because they believed it was unjust or evil to do otherwise. Here politics bumps into philosophy, and theology. Jefferson, the Bible-reading Deist, wrote about "the laws of Nature and of Nature's God." Other early WASPs thought in more specifically religious terms. Not everyone shared the same set of terms. Disagreement produced, among other things, the Civil War. But no American doubted that he had a pipeline to what was, in some ultimate sense, True.

No American doubted it, at least, until the rise of modern liberalism, which gave us Arthur Schlesinger, and gives us, even at his best, this sadly passionate, promising, but ultimately disappointing book. □

# The Tyranny of Niceness

JOSEPH SOBRAN

FLORENCE King contends it's okay to be misanthropic. We live in what she calls "the Republic of Nice," in which it is important to appear pleasant and likable and caring, a pose that imposes strains and creates hypocrisy. "Niceness as practiced by Americans is a



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festival of misanthropy denied," she writes. "Our feminized niceness has mired us in a soft, sickly, helpless tolerance of everything." In this atmosphere you're always being tested for niceness, and your politics becomes an easy index of your concern for humanity. The safest course is to subscribe to as many liberal causes as you possibly can.

*With Charity Toward None* is a sort of assertiveness-training course for victims of niceness. Miss King takes quick dyspeptic glances at modern manners and provides case studies of such putative misanthropes of literature and history as Timon of Athens, Fisher Ames, Rousseau, Flaubert, Alceste, Nixon, Gordon Liddy, Coriolanus, Dian Fossey, Anatole France, Ayn Rand, Céline, Ty Cobb, Irving Berlin, James Gould Cozzens, Ambrose Bierce, and Jonathan Odell. Glad to report I didn't make the list.

***With Charity Toward None: A Fond Look at Misanthropy, by Florence King (St. Martin's, 194 pp., $17.95)***

Bierce comes closest to her *beau idéal*. He despised the human race with pitiless wit—and I do mean the whole human race, and I do mean pitiless. He disowned a son, who later killed himself; Bierce kept the young man's cremated remains in a cigar box on his desk.

Today misanthropy is in disrepute, so we bottle it up, but it comes out in veiled form in such moralistic hostilities as those of environmentalists and anti-smokers and various political do-gooders who, as they say, love humanity and hate people. Miss King merely wishes they would be franker about their malevolence. She wittily offers frank misanthropy as a valid alternative lifestyle for those who have had it with perpetually aiming to please, and she detests the false "friendliness" of advertisers and politicians.

I understand. This has always been a national problem. Tocqueville noticed that in a commercial democracy like ours, where status is fluid and therefore insecure, good manners are more prevalent than in, say, a feudal society, where neither duke nor peasant can be easily demoted. But having to please everyone gets to be a psychic burden, as when Willy Loman devotes his life to being "well liked." And most of us long at times for the freedom to be a curmudgeon, a breed we envy and cherish, even if we prefer W. C. Fields to Bierce.

But there's a difference between a curmudgeon and a real misanthrope, and Miss King seems to confuse the two things. She says the real monsters of history—men like Caligula, Stalin, and Hitler—weren't true misanthropes. She may have a point, but I'm not sure what it is. I suppose political success requires social skills the misanthrope despises, and he tends to be reclusive. Anyway, bombing a city doesn't mean you hate the whole human race, or even the people you bomb. These things are usually done with professions of hope for the good of mankind, which may even be sincere. As Miss King says, "It is not necessary to like people to respect them." And it's not necessary to hate them in order to kill them.

*With Charity Toward None* is a highly humorous book, maybe a little too humorous. Much of the time it wants to say serious things, but it says them with a somewhat relentless jocularity that keeps taking everything back, or at least forbidding you to hold the author to her words.

In this Miss King is like P. J. O'Rourke, another witty writer who, though often very funny, doesn't know when to quit and comes perilously close to turning everything into a gag. This tendency sounds almost ingratiating and undermines the book. The tone that says "just kidding" is uncomfortably close to niceness. It shows a lack of misanthropic conviction.

The book would have been funnier if it had been less self-consciously humorous. Miss King's remarks on Ayn Rand and Céline are especially perceptive, and suggest that she could plumb much deeper into her theme if she wanted to. Anyone with her sense of humor doesn't have to make a constant effort to amuse. She's bound to do it anyway, and the laughs might be richer if they were spaced more unexpectedly.

But she has her own way of seeing things, and every sentence is all hers. This book's flaws don't include dullness. □

*Mr. Sobran, NR's Critic-at-Large, writes a twice-a-week column for Universal Press Syndicate.*


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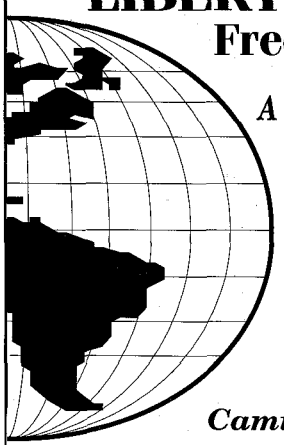

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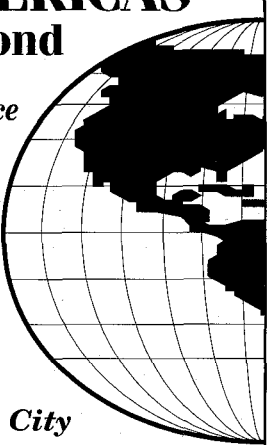

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FILM

# Exaltation in Alaska, Degradation in Hollywood

JOHN SIMON

FEMALE buddy pictures are getting to be the thing: *Thelma and Louise* and *Fried Green Tomatoes* are now followed by ***Leaving Normal***, which, like the first of the above, is both a road and a buddy movie, minus the exaggeration and violence. I wish I could report that this restraint made it better. There are screenwriters to whom honest understatement is of no help. I cannot say whether in the case of Edward Solomon, whose first solo writing venture this is (the two *Bill and Ted* films, which I missed, were collaborations), dishonest overstatement would constitute an improvement, but this attempt to write about two engagingly oddball women, to whom quaint but not all that uncommon things happen, does not work well for him. The mundane and the madcap are a tricky pair to blend, and the early films of Jonathan Demme (*Citizens' Band* and *Melvin and Howard*) are the only recent examples of good screwball comedy I can think of.

Here we get Marianne Johnson, a sweet young woman whose optimism refuses to bow to the buffetings she has received since early childhood, culminating in two failed marriages. She is on the lam from the disastrous second, fleeing from a brutish husband in the fictitious burg of Normal, Wisconsin, with nothing but the clothes on her back, when she runs into her exact opposite. Darly Peters, a cynical cocktail waitress intimately acquainted with the seamier side of life, is headed for Alaska, where she owns a house and property and expects to make a fresh start away from cocktail lounges and the wolfish lizards inhabiting them.

To pin so much hope on the North, where, 18 years ago, she abandoned a two-day-old daughter, seems to me to belie too flagrantly Darly's basic personality, as does her adoption of the teary, childlike Marianne as her traveling companion and protégée. On their northward journey, the women stop off at the home of Marianne's pragmatic sister, who lives in a model home with a model husband and model overindulged children. This perfect family scene is redolent of the Protestant work ethic and its rich rewards, and our heroines flee from it as fast as they can. On they push, with perhaps an echo of *Five Easy Pieces* ringing in their, or their screenwriter's, ears. They have their setbacks and minor victories; they have escapades with two truckers, one extroverted, one shy; later with two very young Eskimos (or is it Indians?) who live on Darly's land and eventually help them build the house that, contrary to Darly's ex-husband's promise, was nothing more than a disheartening skeleton. Many comic trials and tearful tribulations later, it all ends happily in Eternity Bluff, Alaska, for which it was well worth leaving Normal.

The movie, shot preponderantly on Canadian locations, makes everything from Wisconsin to Alaska look picturesque and believable. Still, what makes this superficial piece of filmmaking worth the bother is the pair of actresses in the leads. Meg Tilly, as Marianne, and especially Christine Lahti, as Darly, tower above a mess of political correctness and cliché writing, even above the photogenically snow-clad mountains and the aurora borealis, that great kaleidoscope in the sky. Charmingly complementing each other, Miss Tilly basks in everything that, in pre-feminist days, could be summed up as lovable girlishness, while Miss Lahti exudes all the complex aroma of mature womanliness. Edward Zwick has directed in perfectly workmanlike fashion amid Ralf Bode's atmospheric and artistic cinematography—the film's third, not inconsiderable, selling point.

*Mr. Simon, NR's film critic, is also theater critic for* New York *magazine.*


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■ The raves are coming in for Robert Altman's ***The Player*** from reviewers of every stripe. It is as if Leonardo da Vinci, after not death but merely a few centuries' snooze, were back again with an even more mysterious *Mona Lisa*, a more mystical *Last Supper* than the last.

What, in point of fact, is or was Robert Altman? A converted television director who made *M*A*S*H*, an amusingly absurdist army satire, and *Nashville*, a sprawling, overambitious movie that, after being repeatedly cut in half like the Sibylline books, emerged both prophetic of cinematic things to come and arresting in its own right. Good accomplishments, to be sure, but Altman's other films, both before and after *Nashville*, were so doggedly experimental, such mulishly avant-garde H*A*S*H, that Altman's chief contribution to film history may yet be the muddied soundtrack. For, starting with *McCabe and Mrs. Miller*, Altman's main trick was the systematic overlapping of several conversations, making us strain to decipher the dialogue. If we failed, the failure and loss (we thought) were our own; if we succeeded, we were so elated with our unscrambling that we overlooked the paltriness of what was decoded. Besides, Pauline Kael pronounced *McCabe* sublime, and goaded her numerous fans into advanced Altmania.

But unlike most major directors, Altman appears to lack a literary sensibility of any kind, and displays along with a bloated ego a remarkably shriveled intelligence. Thus he turned out ever more muddled and pretentious atrocities until he ended up unbearable, unbankable, and unemployable. Now, after a ten-year hiatus, he returns with trivia worthy of Jackie Collins or Judith Krantz, hailed as a sublime comeback. Let us not forget that the screenplay, based on his own novel, is by Michael Tolkin, the man who last year gave us *The Rapture*, starring Mimi Rogers, a piece of apocalyptic trash megalomaniacal to the point of near imbecility. *The Player*, which purports to be a wicked satire about Hollywood's greed, corruption, and stupidity, is a prime symptom of them rather than a lancing or curettage.

Griffin Mills, a rising studio executive, though suitably crass and unscrupulous, is made jumpy by an impending shakeup that may replace


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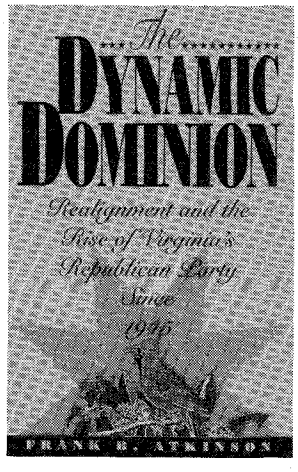


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him with the even more crass and unscrupulous Larry Levy. Mills is rendered even more jittery by anonymous missives, on postcards and faxes, that threaten his demise in retaliation for what he has done to writers. He manages to track down the rejected scenarist whom he suspects of hounding him and, in an ensuing fight, batters him to death. Suspected in his turn by the police—in the person of the black female Detective Avery—Mills finds partial respite when his victim's toothsome mistress, the supposed Icelander and self-proclaimed painter June Gudmundsdottir, promptly transfers her affection and favors to him.

What does not help, however, is that the threats continue coming—not least in the shape of a rattlesnake smuggled into his car—which convinces Griffin that he has offed the wrong hack. But, in the end, all comes right: the police are thwarted, Griffin and June are married and expecting, and Griffin and Larry Levy, in a marriage of true hucksters' minds, are producing monstrous movies that promise megabucks. The next one, in fact, will be the story of *this* film, to be called *The Player*, and scripted by the very anonymous epistolarian whom Griffin failed to kill.

I have, of course, greatly simplified the plot here, but nowise betrayed the film's pristine primitivism. *The Player* is essentially an anecdote stretched out to over two hours' duration not by digging into the characters and their relationships, but by routinely stringing together episodes. We never learn much more about Griffin and June than we knew shortly after meeting them, and their adventures are not breathtaking enough, the Hollywood ambience not devastatingly enough portrayed, to cloak a mounting sense of sameness. There is even a nagging suspicion that some of the funding might have come from the fancy restaurants and hostelries that periodically pop up in the proceedings. Such excitement as the film proposes—wit, sex, suspense—flags alarmingly fast; what is meant to compensate, perhaps, is a superabundance of atmosphere: old movie posters and stills on the walls, references to old movies in the conversations, and certain techniques evocative of the films of the past.

So, for example, even as one character is overheard praising the long

tracking-shot opening of Welles's *Touch of Evil*, an even longer and more elaborate tracking shot, including that bit of dialogue, marks the beginning of *The Player*; in its course, we are exposed to the hurly-burly in and around the studio. Again, the cinematography, which in the outdoor sequences tends to go grainy even as in the indoor ones it is often murky, seems to be intended as a tribute to the old B movies—unless it is merely a testimonial to the falterings of Altman's favorite cameraman, the Canadian Jean Lepine. And again, as in the old genre movies, the colorfully bizarre minor characters look like the triumph of Central Casting. Yet such devices, while delighting movie buffs and nostalgia hounds, add relatively little to the quality of the work.

A more striking device here is Altman's recruitment of any number of Hollywood stars and near-stars to appear in cameo—sometimes almost subliminal—performances. At times, these celebrities are identified in the dialogue; at others, they are offered as challenges to the moviegoers' ability to spot and identify them. This game, though not without its amusement value, detracts from rather than adding to the sense of reality (this is Hollywood and, of course, stars are everywhere!): the viewer, hellbent on catching the luminaries, loses sight of the story. The strategy also suggests a—by no means unwarranted—directorial lack of faith in the merit of the material at hand.

As usual, Altman strains after Effect with a capital E. For example, he shoots the major sex scene in extreme closeup of two profiles, one above the other, with the dialogue dissolving into moans and panting. The result is stark and startling, but also self-defeating: seeing every blemish on those complexions, hearing all that heavy breathing and grunting, is not a turn-on—any more than is another scene showing these lovers stretched out in parallel mud baths at a desert resort. Tim Robbins, a good but funny-looking actor, has little to lose by such maneuvers; but the lovely Greta Scacchi is abused for no good reason. To cover these already morally compromised lovers with layers of mud and ridicule is to nudge us into withholding that bit of lust and sympathy even unsympathetic characters need to subsist on.

Satire? Not really. Nothing here really punctures, really deflates, except the initial sequence that has aspiring scenarists pitch their screenplay ideas at Mills in 25 words or less—though, of course, profusely groveling, they exceed the allotted amount. And casting the insufferable Whoopi Goldberg, whose smugness knows no bounds, as Detective Avery is the next-to-last straw. The last is Lepine's way of shooting her, so that her black face emerges in medium shots as a mere dark blur. An aesthetic and moral blur is what the entire movie is, too. □

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MACAULAY said of Dr. Johnson that "our intimate acquaintance with what he would himself have called the anfractuosities of his intellect and of his temper serves only to strengthen our conviction that he was both a great and a good man." This has been applied to Igor Stravinsky, though there are some who would doubt his goodness. In brilliant and incisive comments on

*Mr. Toledano is a contributing editor to* NR *and author of a forthcoming autobiography.*



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the music of his times and the men who performed it, he could be venomous—the venom more poisonous because there were few who could match his powers of analysis and musical observation. That his "immense presence"—a phrase of repeated authorship—dominated the music of this century there is no doubt, and the *voice* he fashioned out of his innovation and its combat with past expression can be said to be the authentic one of his age.

Now Sony, which took over the catalogue of Columbia and CBS Records, has issued a 22-CD collection of Stravinsky's work as conducted by himself or by his assistant and alter ego, Robert Craft, after the composer's health prevented him from confronting the rigors of the podium. The definitive Stravinsky *oeuvre*, *Igor Stravinsky, 1882–1927: The Edition* is described as a "monument to Igor Stravinsky" but it is also a monumental achievement in recording, for these 22 CDs will remain as a guide to the playing of Stravinsky. For him, there will be no approximations in performance and interpretation as there are for the masters of earlier times (Sony, SMK 46291–46302).

■ Richard Strauss was also a composer–critic—though he wrote about music with more wit and less perceptiveness than Stravinsky. And that he thought of his own opera *Salome* as "elfin" says something about his self-judgment.

*Salome* is anything but elfin in its use of Oscar Wilde's play. Wilde had written it in French for Sarah Bernhardt—it was translated into English by Lord Alfred Douglas, his lover—which means that he expected a certain amount of the overblown in performance. But the German translation that Strauss used as his libretto removes it from the Wildean genre. The Strauss *Salome*, in fact, has more of the elements of a score for a Cecil B. De Mille epic than a cut at the *faux* exoticism that marks Wilde's script. In any case, German as a sung language induces flatting, especially in *crescendi*. As performed by Zubin Mehta, the Berlin Philharmonic, and an array of singers who have done far better in the past, *Salome* is rousing music, sometimes hitting you in the gut and sometimes in the risibles (Sony, S216 46717). But if you wish to hear Strauss's way with an orchestra without the droning of the recitative, you will be far happier with his *Also sprach Zarathustra*, for which Michael Tilson Thomas and the London Symphony Orchestra give you measure for measure (Sony, SK 45970).

■ French is a far better *sung* language than German, though it trails Italian and Spanish as guarantors of the open throat, something you will grant when you listen to the Cherubini *Lodoïska*, as recorded by Riccardo Muti and the Orchestra and Chorus of the Teatro alla Scala in Milan. It is what the French, who are so skillful at labeling, call a *pièce à sauvetage*, a rescue play, recalling that mainstay of America's popular theater and the silent films in which the heroine is rescued at the

last moment by the hero or the U.S. Marines. For some reason this appealed to the *sans culottes* of the French Revolution, who gave *Lodoïska* a run of two hundred performances.

Cherubini created a stage-set Poland for *Lodoïska*, with a Tartar sauce of heroes and villains. The libretto is no sillier than some others, and the music is engaging and tuneful, of a quality the composer took with him when he became a kind of court musician during the Second Empire. Riccardo Muti and a group of soloists with well-matched voices romp through the score with good taste and the right degree of respect (Sony, S2K 47290).

■ A very felicitous coupling is Vivaldi's *Credo* and Verdi's *Quattro Pezzi Sacri*, in a beautifully paced and uttered reading by Carlo Giulini, the Ernst–Senff chorus, and the Berlin Philharmonic. For by placing a great Italian composer whose professional life covered most of the first half of the eighteenth century along with another who composed through the second half



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of the nineteenth, it puts to rest much of the nonsense about the theatricality of Verdi's religious music. Both composers reached back to the polyphony that attained its heights in the liturgy of Palestrina and Victoria—and in these works the two Vs sound, superficially, almost contemporary with each other. It is all rich, soul-shaking music, cutting to the quick of faith—some of it somber and introspective, and some demonstrating that Christianity is not summed up by the *Pietà* (Sony Classical SK46491). □

## MANNERS IN PARIS

# The Mouse That Ate France

JENNY REES

WHEN YOU wish upon a star, the last thing you want to hear is sneering from French intellectuals. Makes no difference who you are. But for the senior Disney executives who, last weekend, opened Euro Disneyland, a $4-billion Enchanted Kingdom on the flat farmlands of the Seine-et-Marne to the east of Paris, the disdain of the French chattering classes was particularly unwelcome.

It was a Parisian theater director, Ariane Mnouchkine, who was the first *aux armes*. Euro Disneyland, she declared, is a "cultural Chernobyl." In *Le Figaro* last week, her colleague, Jean Cau of the Académie Française, wrote of "this horror of cardboard, plastic, atrocious colors, solidified chewing-gum constructions, and idiotic folk stories that come straight out of cartoon books for fat Americans. It is going to wipe out millions of children . . . mutilitate their imaginations." The London *Daily Telegraph* reported that some French intellectuals have gone even further and demanded that the whole thing be burned to the ground. But the hostility has come not only from intellectuals.

On the eve of the public opening of Euro Disneyland—Disney's second overseas theme park, the first being in Tokyo—an electricity pylon was blown up near the site. Police suspect it was the work of protestors. And, on opening day itself, the spanking new railway station stood silent and empty as railway staff carried out a strike designed to rain on Disney's parade. President Mitterrand has neatly avoided siding with the opposition. When asked what he thought of Euro Disneyland, which he has so handsomely subsidized, he said: "I respect cultural expressions of a foreign origin, but it's not exactly my cup of tea."

Ignorance and impudence always go together, as the great William Hazlitt said. What *are* these people going on about?

In effect, what they are objecting to is large numbers of people willing to pay $42 for an adult and $25 for a child to enter a totally harmless and innocent world for a day. The gateway to Euro Disneyland is a perfect reproduction of the main street of a small American town at the turn of the century, with railway station, gas-lit lamps, and horse-drawn street cars. Balzac would have been very happy here. And Tocqueville, with his immense curiosity about all things American, would have been in his element in the copy of the small Western town of Thunder Mesa and, beyond it, in the Grand Canyon, where wolves howl from the heights and antelope roam. The most ferocious creature in the place is the fiery green dragon in the dungeon of Sleeping Beauty's castle. There is no loud rock music, there is no alcohol, and nowhere can you buy a packet of cigarettes.

And this is going to wipe out millions of children?

The French, defying their self-appointed arbiters of taste, poured into the park in their thousands on opening day (April 12). Some waited four hours to get in. A nation that loves novelty and gadgets was not going to be left out of this big event. Some arrived already kitted out in cowboy boots. They wore Levi jeans, they wore Ray-Bans, they wore jackets imprinted with "U.S. Marine Corps" or "Miami Dolphins." They were soon looking even more chic. Frenchmen stepped out of the Thunder Mesa general store wearing ten-gallon hats, and little French girls sprouted Minnie headbands with black plastic mouse ears. They made telephone calls home: *"Ouiiii . . . je suis à Disneyyyy."*

The French, as we know, are beautifully hypocritical about America. It is still a source of great embarrassment and shame that Uncle Sam had to come and rescue them from the Germans. They glibly talk of the wickedness of American imperialism, but there is envy in their words. They would like to be the most powerful country in the world and they are not.

They watch American films, they wear American clothes, they eat *"le fast food,"* they read comics, they use American expressions. It is that most

*Miss Rees is a reporter for the London* Daily Telegraph.


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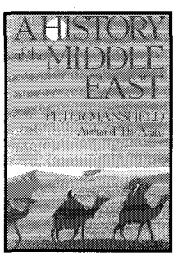


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passionate of human relationships—the love–hate one. But the ordinary Frenchman, unlike *les intellectuels*, is not frightened by Mickey Mouse, nor does he feel that Dumbo is going to displace Voltaire or Montaigne.

In the Enchanted Kingdom, the Disney executives, quiet men in grey suits, have performed magic. They have taught the French to smile. I know France well; I have studied there and lived there. At Euro Disneyland (where about half the workforce is French), I heard uttered from French lips for the first time ever in my life, the words, "You're welcome. That's no trouble."

The reporters from *Libération* newspaper, read by all those who wish 1968 were still with us, sneered, of course. "Of the two who dominated the crowd on the balcony of Sleeping Beauty's castle, the president of the Walt Disney company was the one without the big black ears," they wrote. But even they noticed this curious phenomenon of smiling, which, they said, quite unsettled home-grown visitors. One of the French staff confided to them, they reported: "The foreigners are used to being smiled at, but the French don't understand it. They think they are being taken for idiots."

The Disney executives have fallen over backward to place the park in a European cultural context. French is the first language of Euro Disneyland. Sleeping Beauty is *La Belle au Bois Dormant*, and Snow White and her little friends are *Blanche-Neige et les Sept Nains*.

Robert Fitzpatrick, president of Euro Disneyland, speaks impeccable French. Michael Eisner, chairman and chief executive of the Walt Disney Company, found himself explaining to French visitors that "Snow White" is a German fairy tale, "Pinocchio" was written by an Italian, "Cinderella" and "Sleeping Beauty" were both written by a Frenchman, Charles Perrault, and the characters Mary Poppins and Peter Pan are English. In a sense, he said, in his opening speech from the ramparts of Sleeping Beauty's pastel pink *château*, all these characters have come home to their roots.

On the day before the park opened to the public, Mr. Eisner dealt with the subject of the French intellectuals and their absurd squeals of distaste. He said: "Look, when we were told

*(Continues on page 61)*



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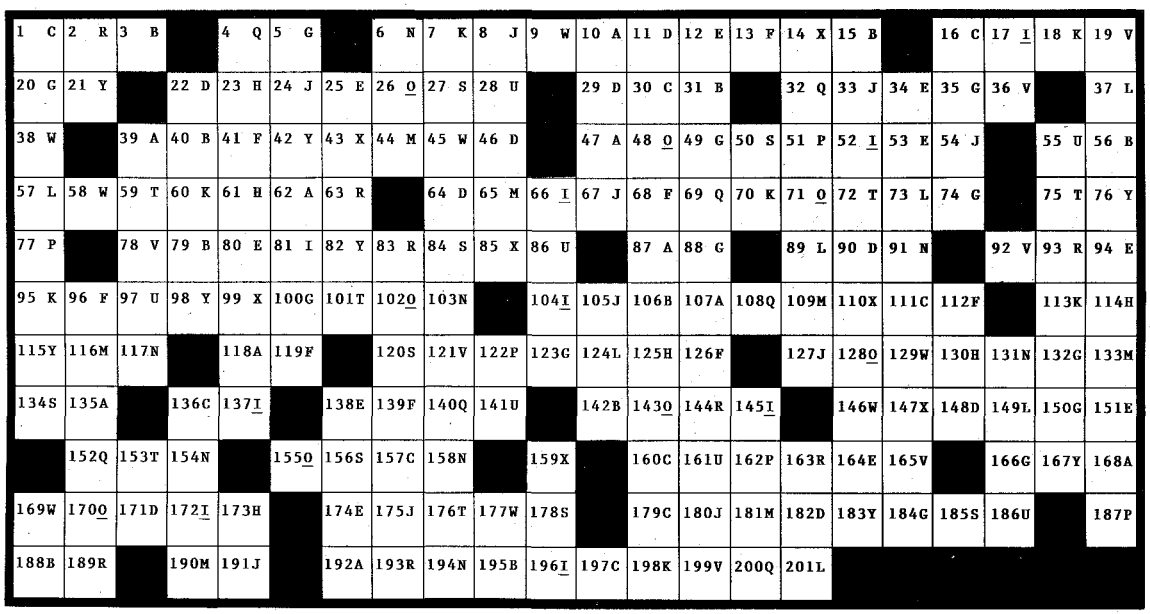
# TRANS-O-GRAM / Kem Putney




## DEFINITIONS

A. Webster's concern — 47 87 168 192 39 10 62 118 107 135

B. Hardworking kind of agency — 79 40 106 188 31 15 195 56 3 142

C. Kasparov goal — 111 30 197 1 157 160 179 136 16

D. Naval possession? — 148 29 11 46 182 22 90 171 64

E. Youngster's means of mobility — 80 34 174 138 25 94 53 12 164 151

F. Seamstresses' need — 112 139 68 41 13 96 126 119

G. Glowing with white light — 184 123 49 132 88 166 35 74 20 5

H. Small cup — 150 100 173 23 130 125 61 114

I. Like the blowhard — 137 104 145 172 17 52 66 81 196

J. Insipid, in a rhyming sort of way — 54 33 67 180 191 127 8 24 175 105

K. Like a besotted gherkin — 18 95 70 113 198 7 60

L. Site of golf's Masters — 124 73 57 149 201 89 37

M. Massage — 65 44 190 109 181 116 133

N. Produce — 158 131 103 91 117 154 194 6

O. More than a few — 102 71 155 48 128 26 143 170

P. A state and onetime republic — 162 122 77 187 51

Q. Powerful — 152 4 140 69 108 32 200

R. Only humans and hyenas indulge in it — 189 2 163 63 193 83 93 144

S. Award fit for a Triple Crown winner — 134 84 178 156 120 50 185 27

T. Prayer — 72 59 101 75 176 153

U. Getting close — 141 28 161 55 97 186 86

V. Cut — 36 165 199 121 78 19 92

W. One with German and Chinese parents, e.g. — 129 177 45 58 9 169 146 38

X. "Law" that came up in Thomas hearings — 85 99 43 110 147 159 14

Y. Abstain from spirits — 21 167 76 98 115 183 42 82

## DIRECTIONS

The object of TRANS-O-GRAM is to fill in the puzzle diagram by guessing the words from their definitions, and transferring each letter of the guessed word to the correspondingly numbered square in the diagram. When the diagram is filled in it will spell out a quotation from some published work (reading normally from left to right, black boxes indicating the ends of words); also, when the words have all been filled in above, their initial letters will spell out the author and title of the quoted work. The acrostic feature, and the relative word-lengths in the diagram, will assist in the solution. Spelling and definitions on the authority of *Webster's New International Dictionary*, Second Edition.

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♥ ♥ ♥

## Mother's Day Greetings

THERESA ASHTON is not only a very special lady, but is always there for me. What more could a son want? I love you, Mother. Michael (MRA).

CONSTANTIA DOTTIN: Thanks for all the love you have given not only me, but the rest of the Dottin family also. Love, Kathleen.

MOMALA, ya dun good! A.D.P. & B.S.P.

DEAR MOM: If it wasn't for you, who would drive me to school in the morning? Love, David.

PUBLIC NOTICE: Angela F. is hereby decreed the world's greatest mother. So say I, Jack. Of course, Sharon says the same about Kay M. We're both right.

DEAR MOM: Thanks for everything. Love you. Mark, Cathy, David, John.

TO MY MOTHER, May your free spirit take you to the place you want to be. I love you. Cate.

DEAR STELLA: Happy day, Mother! I celebrate the sweetness of your ways, the warmth of the home you make, the power of the love that you bring forth. Your loving son, Arthur.

WE MAY not tell you how much we appreciate the affection you've given us in good & bad times, but you are in our hearts and minds every day of the year. We love you, Mom. Teresa, Ronald Jr., Kevin, Christopher, Rhonda.

HAPPY Mother's Day, Joan. Love, Robbie, Paul, Roger, Joanie, Willie, John Henry, Geoffrey.

WISHING our Mom all the warmth of love and all the smiles of joy that you deserve on this beautiful day. Love, Derek, Ingrid, Jeremy.

THANKS, Mom, for your love and understanding, for being my best friend, and for the bright and beautiful smile that has always warmed my heart. Love, Vanessa.

MOM—Happy Mother's Day to the most adventurous mother I know! Lots of love, Terry.

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**REES**

(Continued from page 58)

about this, we sat down and tried to figure out just who these French intellectuals were. When we found that some of them could be Communists, we didn't see why we should have to take any notice of them, anyway. But we think that if they bring their children to Euro Disneyland they will have a good time."

However, given another excuse to vent their favorite charge of U.S. cultural imperialism, the French intellectuals are already having a hell of a good time. □

# BOOKS IN BRIEF

*Storming the Statehouse: Running for Governor with Ann Richards and Dianne Feinstein, by Celia Morris (Scribner's, 325 pp., $25)*

THIS is as much an abortion and feminism advocacy book as it is an account of the 1990 gubernatorial campaigns of Ann Richards and Dianne Feinstein. Author Celia Morris argues that since the "right" to abortion is under attack, and since this right involves only women, women should therefore be elected to defend it—and themselves. Miss Morris paints these two politicians as courageous leaders in a world in which women are supposed to stay at home and care for the kids. She praises Mrs. Feinstein for leaving her first husband because she did not want to remain a housewife, and both ladies because neither "really believes that our current set of problems can be solved without raising taxes"—anyone who does "is likely also to believe in the tooth fairy." (Mrs. Feinstein, however, is not as courageous as her Texas colleague, in Miss Morris's opinion, since her views were similar to those of her opponent, Pete Wilson. We're also to think less of Mrs. Feinstein because she's not comfortable in blue jeans.) Miss Morris doesn't include other female candidates such as pro-life ("anti-choice") Kansas Governor Joan Finney, who ran and won in the same year as her colleagues from Texas and California—but if she had, we can be sure they would not have been as courageous. —GEOFFREY MORRIS



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## The Fault, Dear Brutus, Is in Ourselves

NEW YORK, APRIL 8

Scanning the vote figures in New York, and examining the remarks of people leaving the polls as if they were articulating a freshly discovered text by James Joyce, the psephologists have come to one conclusion. It is that the Democrats have not come up with a convincing "leader."

Now, if the United States were a walled fortress, and outside we were surrounded by the forces of Genghis Khan, and every day our supply of food and ammunition dwindled, we would badly need a leader. Indeed, as recently as two or three years ago one might have drawn an analogy. We were not exactly surrounded, but we were living in a world tyrannized by an enemy publicly pledged to eliminate liberty everywhere and armed with weapons that would fly seven thousand miles and wipe out whole populations. We needed a leader to summon the will not only to resist, but to seek out means to weaken the enemy. What then happened, when the Berlin Wall came down in 1989, and the coup was frustrated in 1991, was the end of that threat: and the end of the need for a leader of wartime dimensions.

What happened to America after the cold war was that we were left facing other problems, problems that don't pose a threat of military disaster. Rather, what one might call routine problems. Every country has routine problems. Ours strike us as more than routine only because we are the richest nation in the world, and the most powerful. When a giant contracts the flu, the tremors are worldwide phenomena. But they are not matters of life and death.

We suffer from an increasing fixation with the Presidency. And we don't really quite know what we are saying when we shake our heads sadly and say that Bill Clinton, and Jerry Brown, and Paul Tsongas do not strike us, really, as leaders. What qualities should they manifest in order to materialize in the public eye as leaders? Should they be quietly inscrutable, unsmiling and solemn, like de Gaulle? Should they demonstrate a power to transform mobs of listeners into frenzies of adulation, like the Beatles and Adolf Hitler?

Or is it that they should have a program so catalyzing as to inflame the imagination of the majority of people who answer Mr. Roper's polls? But what should such a leader, announcing such a platform, be advocating?

In Switzerland there are, for the first time in many years, crises, but they are Swiss-sized. There is unemployment at the staggering rate of 2 per cent. There is inflation at the unheard-of rate of 4 per cent. The heads of the various parties have advanced proposals, which are deliberated by the assembly in Berne. There is no national sense of the need for a messianic president, in part because most Swiss don't know what is the name of their president, so relatively insignificant are his duties.

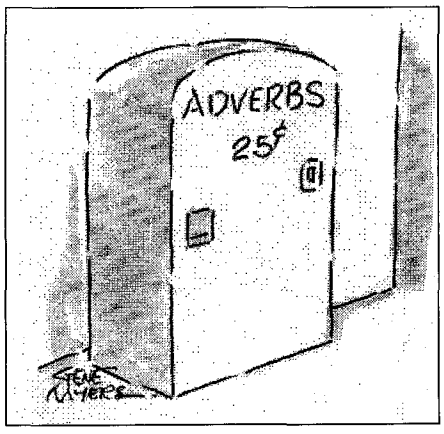
But our tendency is to apotheosize our President, to think of him as exercising near-divine powers. According as we select the right man, we will or we will not overcome our problems.

But what are our problems? Education is weak, crime is rampant, unemployment is unsatisfactorily high, the budget deficit continues to mount, and an underclass appears to be taking root, disdaining the process of upward mobility by which for two hundred years we have handled the problem of the poor.

Why is it that more than half the voters think Clinton et al. implausible as "leaders"? I suspect it is because they accost those voters as though they uniquely possess the keys to the salvation of America. If you examine the proffered formula and decide it isn't all that magical, then you doubt the credentials of the person who hawks that magic.

We were founded as a nation of self-governed people. The President of the United States is charged to recommend legislation once every year and, in between, to execute the laws passed by Congress. Why do we need a Napoleonic character to lead Congress? Why can't Congress itself act responsibly?

The answer to that is the answer we least want to hear. It is that the American people don't punish those congressmen who ignore the national interest. And they don't punish them for the simple reason that they ignore the national interest in order to serve the narrow interest of their constituency. We do not need a leader, we need to reform ourselves. □



Eugene Myers, reprinted with permission.

## Bush at Bat

NEW YORK, APRIL 3

Governor Clinton had a good old time at the expense of President Bush to the effect that he, Clinton, was ahead of him, Bush, on the matter of aid of some kind to the Soviet Union. In rapid succession we had a) a release by Mr. Bush of his program (details fuzzy) to help Russia et al. in their effort to face the ordeals of life under political and economic freedom; b) a speech by Governor Clinton to the Foreign Policy Association recommending exactly such steps; c) a claim by Governor Clinton that he had been working on such a proposal ever since last December, together with the claim d) that Mr. Bush had been prompted to act only under the prodding of Richard Nixon; which was followed by e) Secretary of State Baker saying on *MacNeil–Lehrer* that this was nonsense, that the White House and the State Department had been focusing on the program all along. Snoooorrrre-time.

What the Bush people do not appear to know is that a substantial number of voters are truly eager for solid ideas about how to solve real problems. It can be for only this reason that Ross Perot has got such attention, wild as his proposals are (his latest: Congress should be relieved of the right to authorize any additional expenditures—what a *terrific* idea!). For instance, on the endless debate over capital-gains taxes, Mr. Bush



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might profitably say: "It is clear that Congress is not going to give me the capital-gains-tax relief I think we ought to have. But almost all the objections they raise to the existing plan disappear if I submit one modification. It is that the capital-gains tax should be reduced to zero—but only for investments in fresh enterprises, beginning the day after the tax bill is passed. Such a bill will be submitted in Congress tomorrow. After it is passed, the debate can continue on the virtues of the original bill I proposed, as also on the justice of indexing capital gains."

There are other novel suggestions Mr. Bush should advance, to put him ahead of the opposition and to give the impression that the White House is humming with ideas rather than with torpor.

The most alluring by far is an offshoot of the Police Corps idea, the cause militant, which came so near to passage last year, of New York attorney and public servant Adam Walinsky. It is a design to enact an intermediate program in the fashion of the service academies, which get four years' military service from qualified young men and women in exchange for giving them free education at West Point et al.

The idea is to do something about our dissolving armed forces. A half-million young men and women, all volunteers, are scheduled to be discharged in the next period under our demobilization program. The proposal of Mr. Walinsky is that 200,000 should be assigned to police forces around the country. Anyone who picks up the morning paper in any city of any size in America acknowledges the need for more protection against criminals. The highly trained soldiers would be equipped, after training from civilian police authorities, and under their supervision, to handle dangerous duty. Thirty per cent of those likeliest to be discharged are black, and therefore especially useful to patrol black areas of the big cities, where a preponderant amount of the crime goes forward. These are people highly motivated. It has been remarked by sociologists that the single class of blacks that have zero complaints of discrimination are those who serve in the army, where meritocratic treatment is something that can be safely relied upon.

There are many administrative details to work out. How long would the Federal Government be responsible for paying the salaries of these discharged persons? What would be the integrative mechanisms that would make these ex-soldiers especially useful? As patrolmen, detectives, supervisors?

These are details, and Mr. Bush need not ignore their importance. But he ought not to delay his endorsement of the idea, even as he ought not to delay his endorsement of the capital-gains-tax modification until somebody else thinks of it. It is overdue for the White House to go-go on these matters, high among them a GOP resolution on behalf of term limitation. □

## *Will Bush Rediscover Beck?*

NEW YORK, APRIL 10

The failure of President Bush to follow through on some of his finer insights is nowhere better illustrated than in his veto message of March 20. His primary objective on that occasion was to say No to the Congress that came in with its own agenda for tax reform, which included higher taxes. But the President took the occasion to give a spirited speech enumerating the delinquencies of the Democratic activists. And among his targets was the failure of the *Beck* decision to receive the publicity it merits. He said he was going to take steps of his own, directing that that decision be publicized among government-contract employees. But he had already nominated members to the National Labor Relations Board, which is the principal body concerned with implementing *Beck*: and whom should Mr. Bush name as Chairman of the NLRB? One James Stephens. Mr. Stephens filed a brief opposing *Beck* when it was being argued by the Supreme Court. And who else? Mary Cracraft, who joined in that anti-Beck petition. Another presidential nominee was Donald Rodgers, a former Teamsters Union lobbyist for whom pre-*Beck* practices were the staff of life. In other words, Mr. Bush seemed to be commissioning members of a board to implement policies they enthusiastically opposed.

Harry Beck was a member of the Communications Workers of America who 16 years ago filed a lawsuit against his union charging that substantial portions of union dues were being used to finance political campaigns without any reference to the views of the union workers. The notion that every member of a labor union is in favor of every Left Democrat is blown to pieces, for instance, by the evidence of 1988, when about 40 per cent of labor-union members voted for George Bush rather than Michael Dukakis.

The Court's decision, interestingly enough, was written by a liberal hero, then Justice William Brennan, who cited another liberal hero who once wrote that to require people to finance opinions they disagreed with was "sinful and tyrannical." That was Thomas Jefferson. And the *Beck* decision was talking about very big enchiladas. A careful investigation of union expenditures revealed that only 21 per cent of the dues collected by the Communications Workers of America had actually been spent to finance the purpose of the union, namely to engage in collective bargaining on behalf of its members. Not only had 79 per cent gone into war chests of congenial senators and congressmen; but union cadres also devoted enormous manpower to the political campaigns of their protégés. These so-called "soft money" operations involved telephone calls, mailings, recruitment drives, car pools taking people to the voting booths. For every dollar spent by union PACs in cash, ten times that amount in effort went into the enterprise of collecting votes for legislators who would back union objectives, for instance the Davis–Bacon Act, which requires firms working under federal contract to pay union wages irrespective of where the work is done.

The trouble with *Beck* is that both the unions and the NLRB have proceeded as though it had never been written. It is as if the Thirteenth Amendment had been passed and, four years later, word hadn't reached the black community that involuntary servitude had become unconstitutional. It is quite amazing how easily a law can be neutralized if it is not brought to the attention of those it is designed to benefit. There is also the factor of intimidation. Not everyone is as courageous as Harry Beck. When he went to the heads of his union and said, Please don't use my money to back your candidates, he was following in the tradition of Oliver Twist when he took his plate to the Beadle and asked for "more." Unless the NLRB hands down instructions the effect of which is to safeguard union fees against political cooptation, the abuse is likely to go on and on. And the enormous investment of organized labor in political campaigns can easily make the difference between victory and defeat certainly in congressional races, and not inconceivably in the national race.

What we need from Mr. Bush is hard public evidence that he is implementing a reform he lustily applauded as recently as on March 20, and that he has told his appointees that they are to observe the direction of the Supreme Court, not their irrelevant objections to it. □

*(Universal Press Syndicate)*



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# The Great Girl

THE MORE things change the more they remain the same. Hillary Clinton, that little female gnome standing next to Skeezix, that wolfish dominatrix of the Dem's den, that smiling barracuda waving her arms off, is none other than an updated version of my old college nemesis from the Fifties, the "great girl."

In pre-feminist times the Great Girl was the female equivalent of the Big Man on Campus. She got her sobriquet because everybody kept saying what a great girl she was; a *really great* girl, with a *great* sense of humor, meaning she was good at knock-knock jokes.

Striving for healthy averageness, good adjustment, and earnest purpose, the Great Girl made a point of being "well-rounded." She majored in Soc or Psych because "All you have to do is read," and chose classes with professors who gave nothing but multiple-choice exams. She was a whiz at them; if a homicidal maniac had jumped out of a dark alley yelling "Sartre!" she would have replied "Umm, existentialism" without turning a hair.

Uncerebral but as smart as the proverbial whip, the Great Girl belonged to one of those female honor societies with a name like The Valkyries that required a B average and emphasized "service to the school," meaning you couldn't get in unless you had so many extracurricular activities that the printer had a nervous breakdown trying to get them all on the same yearbook page with your picture. She never met a committee she didn't like, so she had little cuts on her fingers from making pasteboard signs with razor blades, and if you couldn't find her, all you had to do was follow the crepe-paper trail.

Having been told by legions of progressive teachers that she was a "natural leader," the Great Girl was always rushing off to meetings, in winter arriving at her destination with cold teeth from having smiled all the way across campus. Yet despite her surface friendliness there was something of the Thugee about her. She liked to organize group sings and square-dance lessons to "bring people out of their shells," and God help the clams who did not join these agapes. She was president of the Girls' Dorm Council, so you might find yourself hauled up before her cosy little star chamber and being told, "We know you want to do better and we're here to help you."

The Great Girl was always engaged by her senior year—it was on her list of Things To Do—and her fiancé was always a Big Man on Campus: two wrongs make a Mr. Right et Ux. This alliance brought her to the attention of corporate recruiters who checked out the future wives of their potential executives before closing the deal. Two minutes in her presence and they could relax, secure in the knowledge that she would never become the Emma Bovary of Corning Glass. Not that she wasn't "attractive." It was just that she poured all of her ferocious energy into the kind of extracurricular activities that can be listed in a yearbook; she firmly believed that whenever a boy tried to pet, you should distract him by toasting marshmallows, and it showed.

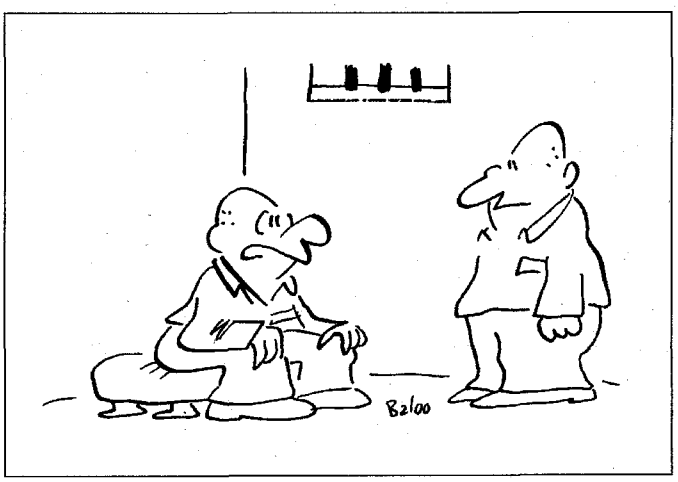
The Great Girl is the type for whom self-help books like *The Sensuous Woman* are written. She is constitutionally incapable of taking the author's advice to have sex in a bathtub filled with Jello, but she would have a grand time making the Jello, running back and forth between stove and tub with bowl after quivering bowl, exclaiming, "Golly, isn't this fun?" It would remind her of the contests and races she organized for Spring Carnival, and the Christmas when she made a hundred pounds of fudge in the housemother's kitchen.

THE Great Girl of the Fifties became a suburban housewife, baking cookies, volunteering, and chairing meetings in an extension of her college days. This was her métier and she enjoyed it, but she was also a conformist, so when feminism came along she ran with the crowd just as she always had, and switched from Feminine Mystique to Tort Mystique. Everybody's going to law school? It must be the *in* thing to do, so the "leader" exchanged her Tupperware for Blackstone and turned into Hillary Clinton.

I tell you, it's the same woman: I'd know that snippy little face anywhere. She gets better grades now, and the crepe-paper trail is now a fax-paper trail, but if you tapped her you would still get an echo. The liberal press claims Hillary Clinton is "defining" the role of future First Ladies, but it's the same old Great Girl trick of "leading" where everybody else is already going. *Newsweek* wondered whether America was ready for such a "self-confident" woman, but it's not true self-confidence. It's the Great Girl kind, in which the confidence resides not in the self but in the feminist model on which the self is based: Ayn Rand would love it.

If Bill Clinton is an adulterer, I don't blame him. As Alice Roosevelt Longworth said of another Democrat: "He deserved some fun—he was married to Eleanor."

—FLORENCE KING




*"I don't know* how *I got here—I started off as the* plaintiff."

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